THE NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE ROMANCE THE NEWS AND COMMERCE

VOL. XXIII ROBERT BONNER, { PUBLISHER, 90 BEEKMAN ST. SATURDAY, JUNE 8 1867. TERMS. { $3 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 15.

AFTER ALL.

BY ALICE CARY.

An old house with an open door,
And a roof ridged thick with moss;
A well with a well-fork at the door,
And a sweep that swings across.

Two windows fronting to the sun,
With curtains white as snow;
A porch where the morning-glories run
And th' grandmother sits to sew.

A gable, seamed with many a crack,
A chimney red and tall;
Some ivy, green almost to black,
That covers half the wall.

A chamber scented through and through
With the leaves of roses dried;
A hearth of flag-stones, broad and blue,
And a spinning-wheel one side.

A garden fenced with a pailing low,
And cut right straight in two
By a pathway bordered with row on row
Of marygolds, pinks and rue.

A glimpse of distant woods, but why
Delay to paint the place?
For, after all, you will know it by
The smile-illumined face

Of one, you will see, who waits for me
In the shadows of the grove,
With shoulders bare, and leaf-brown hair,
And eyes like the eyes of a dove.

So do not mind what flowers you find,
Nor mind th' field, nor the grove;
For just by the face in the shady place,
You will know the house of my Love!

NORWOOD;
OR
VILLAGE LIFE IN NEW ENGLAND.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1867, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.]

CHAPTER IX.

AGATE BISSELL.

Agate Bissell was the stern child of a severe experience. Her father was poor, and would have been industrious but for an unfortunate habit of drinking. Her mother was a woman of decision, of pride of character, of high moral feeling, but subject from childhood to hard work, with only a little education. She grew up a kind of patient warrior against trouble. She had known trouble from childhood. Poverty before and poverty after her marriage, were but minor evils. She had seven children. The third child, but first-born daughter, was Agate. No where except in New England could she have been called *Agate*. Her mother was an earnest reader of the Bible. In her continual troubles she resorted to it, literally as to a refuge. Isaiah above all writers had fired her imagination. There was something in the hopefulness of the stern prophet amidst abounding troubles that seemed peculiarly congenial to her. In particular she dwelt upon the fifty-fourth chapter; so often had she read it, so often had she stayed her sorrow on its exultant promises, that it had come to seem like a voice sounding out specially for her, and had her own name appeared in it she would scarcely have been surprised.

Here had she read, till they mingled with her waking and sleeping thoughts, those words of sublime consolation! Naturally high-minded and sensitive, every aspiration had been almost crushed. Her husband, a good-natured man, could not be redeemed from his cups, and to her proud spirit it seemed as if she were bound to a dead body. Awful thoughts sometimes rose up in her, a horror of temptation, which sent her flying to her chamber for prayer and scripture, like a dove flying from before a swift-pursuing hawk. Then she would read: "For thy Maker is thy husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name. * * * For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit. * * * For a small moment I have forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee."

On some days the clouds came low down, and there was no horizon of hope. Her little children were hungry, her husband drunk, her own strength giving way, and all the future like an on-coming storm. Then she would read, "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee! O, thou afflicted! tossed with tempest and not comforted, behold! I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of AGATES, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children."

This touched to the quick. For her husband there remained only the sentiment of duty. But all her garnered and wounded affections were poured forth upon her children. If by a living death she could save them, and gain a firm foothold for each of them in honorable life, she would willingly have died deaths daily.

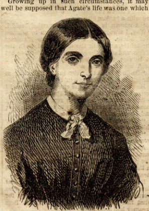
In her poor little dwelling, it may be supposed, were no luxuries. No picture, no print so big as her baby's hand, hung on the wall. She knew no rest, no amusement. Her whole being was a concentrated purpose to bring up her children so that their life should be happier than hers had been. For that, the sun shone—for that, summer and winter came—for that, the Sabbath inserted a seventh golden link in the iron chain of toil—for that, the whole world existed to her, and time itself drew on its train of days and nights! On her feet, in work, wrestling against poverty;—on her knees, in prayer, wrestling against temptations and despair, she reared her children, hoping in them at last to find an end of sorrow and a beginning of joy.

When Agate was just born, she looked upon her face with anguish. She seemed to see all her own miseries stored up for this child. She almost felt a pang of guilt for bringing another woman into life to take a place in that long procession of sufferers, of which women have constituted the largest proportion. She hardly wished to look in her face. Long before the minister sprinkled this little new-comer, her mother had baptized her with tears.

As soon as she could sit up, (and the poor recover from the birth of children sooner than the prosperous!—A rigorous nurse art thou, oh Poverty!—a stern physician, and, though skilful, bitter cruel!) weak, sad, alone, except her little children, her days were darker than anything but the nights. There was little difference in the twenty-four hours, except that the night was darkness plagued with dreams, and the day was darkness plagued with gloomy thoughts. The first day that she could read, her oldest boy brought her well-worn Bible to her. It opened of itself to her favorite chapter. The leaves there were like a travelled road. Let the book fall open a hundred times, and every time it would open at the same place. Then she read: "*I will make thy windows agates.*" A window is that by which light comes through upon our inward darkness, or by which we look out of darkness into light. If a window of God is made of Agate, then, she thought, an agate must be something more clear and beautiful than glass. What agate was she knew not, but it must needs be something glorious and hopeful. "*And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord.*" That was the very anguish-longing of her heart! She seemed to have it borne in upon her that children are the Lord's windows, through which mothers look forth out of pain and darkness into hope and happiness! She seized the happy thought: "I will call her Agate. Perhaps the Lord will make her like a window to my darkness." Thus she was named!

We smile at names. We weigh them in the scale of the ear for sweetness or smoothness. We cull some, we reject others. We laugh at men's odd and awkward names, and quite justly too, it may be; since capricious whims, and vagrant fancies, or mere carelessness, so often select them. But sometimes a name is a history. It is like a pictured vase. We see the figures without thinking in what furnace those colors were fastened, and by what fire the glazing was fused! Is there in any history a record of the heart more touching and simple than that of old? "And it came to pass as Rachel's soul was departing, for she died, that she called his name Ben-oni"—Son of my Sorrow.

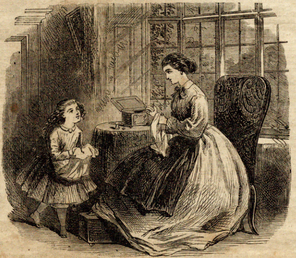
Growing up in such circumstances, it may well be supposed that Agate's life was one which would bring her to more acquaintance with work and vigor of duty, than with those lighter graces which commonly belong to prosperous childhood.



[AGATE BISSELL.]

With as much natural conscience as her mother, she had a less intense pride. She could not sympathize with that shuddering horror at her father's presence, which her mother, with all her struggles, could never subdue. Agate stood between them, loving both, and was indeed a medium—a window—through which each looked upon the other, colored with the hues of the medium.

When at thirteen years of age, her father died—unreformed, stupefied—Agate really mourned. Her mother saw the turf placed upon his grave without a tear. Her soul said, God hath avenged me! For years, the mother and children struggled on. Agate, besides daily work, had, as it were, carried away captive a certain amount of education. No one but he who has tried it knows what power of learning there is, in a mind every faculty of which is tensely strained with desire and necessity. She read with eyes that pierced. What she read was as if it had been burned in. At seventeen, she taught the summer school in her neighborhood. Her brothers were her care at home as well. At twenty-two, her mother went to her rest. On the last day of her life her mind wandered back to her brief hours of early joy. She half-spake and half-whispered some fondling words, as if she was a girl in the days of courtship and love. Then, after a little, the life-long grief seemed again to overshadow her. "Agate—Agate—He's come. Put him to bed. Oh God!" She dozed for an hour. When, after a time, Agate looked upon her mother, her eyes were opened wide, as if she beheld new and strange things. In a low and sweet voice she said: "Yes—I am coming." Before the sun went down, she had departed, and her troubled day was over.



["MA, I'VE GOT SOMETHING FOR YOU."]

Agate Bissell was respected by all her neighbors. Her common sense, her energy, her truth—clear as crystal—her strong moral nature, would have made her a remarkable woman anywhere. She was not handsome by regularity of features; but she had what was better—the open and strong face of a sensible and kind-hearted woman. There was that in her face which one would not willingly see kindled. Her power of indignation was terrible. Young Templeton found that out. He had paid attention to Agate. Good-looking, capable of working, his father's dissipation and example had not acted upon his self-indulgent nature as a like sad example had upon the sterner soul of Agate.

Yet a certain sympathy she had felt for him, from a somewhat similar experience of their lives. Her heart, bound around with cords of restraint, should it once go free, and love, would seek its mate as eagles fly.

It might have been. It never was. One evening he waited upon her to a meeting in Norwood. The way was long,—not too long for them. When they reached the village Agate's step was light. Her face had lost something of its intensity. The light of gentle feelings rested upon it.

They returned home that night, Tom Templeton and Agate Bissell. Afterward they never again spoke to each other. What the history was neither ever said—he for shame, and she from scorn. For years his name kindled upon her face a look so stern and deep in moral indignation, that one would not willingly look upon it. That was the end of her dream of youth. When at thirty she assumed the care of Dr. Wentworth's house, not a tongue in all Norwood dared even in sport to say that the doctor had a young housekeeper. One had better play with fire than with her name. And yet, under this strong-featured pale face, who can tell what stores of love were lying, like gold undug, in fields over which the plow runs and vulgar harvests wave, because no one suspects the gold below or knows how to extract the treasure!

CHAPTER X.

DR. WENTWORTH'S MANSION.

We take shame to ourselves for having never asked our friends into the Doctor's house, but left them, inhospitably, to wander about Norwood as best they might. Not that they are in danger of lacking accommodations; for Norwood is not unaccustomed to company. Hither come hundreds every summer for the pleasure of its wholesome air and the beauty of its charming scenery. There is no lack of hospitable hotels; nor are the landlords unskilled in catering. For all that, our readers had a right to expect an invitation to the Doctor's house; and as the whole family are off to-day on a pic-nic, we will steal in and look over the whole place. This intrusion would be exceedingly rude in actual life; but in books such things are often done, and may be again; and if any complaint arises, I will take the blame.

Approach the old-fashioned mansion through the front yard. First take notice of the roof. The ancient New-England architects seemed to have had a vague idea of a *Mansard* roof. As the attempt was carried out in the case before us, it resulted very nearly in justifying Hiram Beers' saying that the Doctor's roof looked like an old woman's cap, with spectacles mounted on it; for two windows projected from the steep double-leaved roof in a manner that invariably suggested a pair of great eyes! And as there was an open, ornamental railing carried along the eaves and up the gables of the roof, resembling a stiff ruffle, the notion of an old lady's cap and frill once hinted could not be got out of the mind.

The front yard was deep. A straight path led to the front door. On either side of it was a border of shrubs, with intermediate spaces filled with flowers.

A porch of some architectural pretension bestrid the front door, and was itself at once a protection from rain and a trellis for honey-suckles.

The windows on either side were small, if compared with modern windows, and filled with glass that seemed even more diminutive.

No mean little entry receives you, as is too often the case in modern houses. The hall of a dwelling gives you the first impressions. Sometimes on entering you fear that by some mistake you have got into a clothes closet; at others, you enter upon a space so small that it is only by a dexterous interchange of civilities between yourself and the door that you can get in or the door be shut. In some halls, so called, a man sees a pair of corkscrew stairs coming right down upon him, and fears lest by some jugglery he be seized and extracted like a cork into some upper space. Often the doors are so arranged that what with the shutting of the outside door, and the opening of inside ones, the timid stranger stands a chance of being impaled on the latch, or flapped front and rear; for, vigorous springs attached to the doors work with such nimbleness that one needs to be expert, or having opened the door, before he can dash through, it will spring back on him with a "now-I've-got-you" air quite alarming.

Such houses seldom remit their torments here. There is an exquisite symmetry in all the interior adaptations. You finish your visit and rise to depart, taking the door most likely to let you out, and find yourself walking into a sweet-meat closet!

A young beau, having acquitted himself well of the last critical sentences, and executed a half-backward, and wholly awkward march toward the door, with ineffable satisfaction, opens and steps into the china closet! The little girls giggle; the little boys laugh out; the young ladies are confused, and the beau still more so. But, what if it had been the cellar door? On one occasion, visiting a thrifty friend whose dining-room and sitting room were one, we came near descending headlong into his cellar, which, for convenience probably, opened into the dining-room. We once saw three like and equal doors in a sitting-room. The one was the true door of departure; the next, the cellar; and the third a bed-room. There was only one chance in three for a stranger.

Do you not think that a house reveals the architect's disposition? I do. We know much of a writer from his style. The style of a cautious nature will have involved parenthetical sentences, full of qualifications and limitations. An open and imperious disposition is shown in short sentences, direct and energetic. A secretive and proud mind is cold and obscure in style. An affectionate and imaginative nature pours out luxuriantly, and blossoms all over with ornaments.

The same is true with artists who really deserve the name. They paint what they see and feel, and it is this self-part that gives the style. Some subtle part of every man's own spirit goes with his work, is incarnated in it, and gives to it that undiscoverable something which marks and discriminates one artist from another. And so, every artist dips his brush in his own soul, and paints his own nature into his pictures.

Why should not the architect, then, transfuse into his work something of *his* nature, too? Every house has an expression. Every room has a disposition. Some houses are precisionists. They are pinched and crimped, and you almost expect to see a starched ruffle and white apron on them. Others are generous and hospitable. Every time you look at them they seem to say: "Why don't you come in? I am waiting for you." Some dwellings are stately and dignified, and some are cosy and jolly. Every day I see houses that cannot repress their scorn at beggarly houses in their neighborhood! The door has an excluding air. The windows are supercilious, and the very cornice has a curl of well-bred contempt. But it is in the interior of men and houses, that the real disposition must be found. The moment you enter some dwellings, your heart cries out spontaneously, "Peace be within thy walls." There is a charm upon the threshold, a joy in every room. Not a minute of the day do the apartments cease to breathe upon your ear, you are welcome! But, shiver as I do! when you enter as I do, this selfishness in brick and mortar! The architect was a mean and narrow soul, I know! His ceilings are only fifteen feet high. I wonder he did not go on up with them till they were as high as he felt himself to be above common men. What a good ice house this would make! What repulsion is in these walls! As you stand upon the threshold, the whole hall stares at you, and says, in white plaster, "Well, what do you want here?"

All such fears are banished as you enter Dr. Wentworth's old-fashioned mansion. A hall twelve feet wide opens its arms to welcome you. On its sides hang large maps. Toward the farther end rise a flight of stairs six feet wide. They say to you, plain as words can speak, "do not weary yourself." The short rise and broad tread suggest ease. And six or eight steps being taken, the stairs seemed to have changed their mind and concluded to stop there. For, a landing some eight feet wide ran across the whole width of the hall. And the space was still further augmented by a large bow-window, circling out backward, which the Doctor had built and filled with colored glass. Only at the other end of this landing did the stairs consent to start upward again. Perched between the two stories, a grand look-out was thus furnished for summer;—the window on the one side, and the lower hall and upper hall on the other—giving ample command to the eye of all that was going on. In summer it was a favorite resort; and in winter the blaze of colored light always gave a kind of sunrise cheer to the hall.

Midway of the lower hall a grand, old-fashioned, ebony-cased clock, standing on the floor, reached up to the ceiling. It was not only a time-keeper of hours, but of days and months. Its sable vesture, and the great variety of its duties, gave to this venerable instrument an absent-minded air, a sort of reserve and dignity, which well set off the easy ways of all the rest of the dwelling. That clock and Agate Bissell never lost a minute of time, were never tired, and attended wholly and only to their own business. It was difficult to decide which of the two was the more exact and regular. In any single day the clock might win; but take the year together, Agate Bissell undoubtedly was the best time-keeper. She had the whole care of the clock. Dr. Wentworth used to rally her on her beau. "That clock is an enchanted knight. Agate is waiting for him, some day, to make proposals. Nothing less than such matchless graces as in him do reside will ever tempt her!"

ROSE—who must be moved forward in our story six years—took up her father's imaginations, and wove about the old clock all manner of fanciful notions. She was a double child. Her outward nature was sensible, practical, worldly; her inward nature was deep in feeling, solemn and mystical, but veined and traced throughout with the richest flow of imagination. None except her father knew this inward life; nor he, nor she herself, except in a dim and twilight way.

She was just the one to make a hero of this old tall, black clock. To her its strokes, in the deep nights, when summer whip-poor-wills had waked her, were voices proclaiming messages to men. To look upon its face and watch the rise and occultation of pictured stars, and especially of the great plump-faced moon, that, like some men, always seemed scared because it couldn't see anything—was a perpetual, though unspoken pleasure. But we linger. Opening on the left, as you enter, is the Doctor's grand resort—his library. The room ran through the whole depth of the house. The ceiling was only about nine feet high. The centre was crossed by a dressed beam, and the cornice all around the room was formed by the carved frame-beams of the house itself. On either side of the chimney, which stood midway on the west side, were two deep bay-windows; and, on the north end, one large window coming down to the floor, and of the size of three ordinary windows. The sides of the library were filled with cases, and the whole range of English literature was stored in them. The best authors in the modern languages, too, held their tongues eloquently in this Walhalla. Drawers stuffed with curious pamphlets; lower cases with folios, atlasses, etc.; portfolios and volumes of costly engravings—all evinced the Doctor's tastes. Not like the orderly study of Parson Buell was Dr. Wentworth's. No long rows of books stood stiff and stern on the shelves, like soldiers on parade. Some books were out visiting; some, in an affectionate mood, were leaning over on an accommodating neighbor; and some, tired of their heavy contents, had lain down flat and gone to sleep, as if to give their readers, should they have any, the proper cue. Some were splendidly bound, and flamed their golden letters from blue, and green, and crimson, or modest russet. Others stood in cloth; some, in paper. Some shelves were packed and stuffed till they seemed bursting; others stood thinly, like a school half of whose scholars had gone out to play.

Here was the true peace-society. Old quarrels were hushed here. Heretic and orthodox stood in silent truce. The men that kept the world in a racket, in their time,—Luther and they of the Vatican, Milton and Salmasius, Arminius and the whole Synod of Dort, Jesuits and Jansenists, the ancients, mediæval scholastics, modern reformers—were patient with each other and with the rising fame of modern scientific authors. Books are the true metempsychosis—they are the symbol and presage of immortality. The dead men are scattered, and none shall find them. Behold, they are all here! they do but sleep. At your summons every one shall speak and instruct you in the best experiences of his life!

Turning from the hall, as you come in at the front door, to the right, you enter the large parlor; and, next to it, the sitting-room; and a door from each room opens into the conservatory, where there was summer all the year round.

The dining-room and kitchen were included in the wing which ran back from the south-east corner of the house, and which was of such dimensions that, had it stood alone, it would have seemed a house of itself.

The old mansion was built in a stately style, at a time when stateliness was well understood. Few modern dwellings are more picturesque, more winning to the eye, than the best of the old colonial mansions. They tell their story at once. They proclaim comfort, room, hospitality, and elegant taste. They are passing away. Perhaps we have nothing to regret. Convenience and beauty have their modern architects. Yet, the pictorial art ought, while it can be done, to secure those memorials of an early day, and transmit them as precious parts of our New-England history.

But stop. Turn back. We have neglected the heart of home, the mother's room! The old temple had no such holy of holies. The mother's room! Here came she a bride. Here only God's angels and her own husband have heard what words the inmost heart of love can coin. Here were the children born. Here in love were they cherished, in piety consecrated, and here Hope, the mother's prophet and painter, has filled golden hours with a wealth of expectations and fancied joys!

If every child might live the life predestined in a mother's heart, all the way from the cradle to the coffin they would walk upon a beam of light, and shine in glory. Alas! some are born like the dandelion—glowing bright, soon changing to a fairy globe, and by the first wind dashed out and gone!

Paint the man as the mother's thoughts do; then paint him as he really lived! Hang the two portraits side by side, and write, *What he was to be!* and then, *What he was!* Life has no sadder contrast.

Shall I? It is audacious; and yet for your sake, reader, I would do much. Well, come, I will even venture. This is Agate Bissell's room. No one may go in here without leave. She and her room are so much one, that this intrusion she would resent as a personal liberty. I know that politeness forbids, but your curiosity and my love of accurate description prevail, and, as usual, politeness must give way when it is not convenient. No rocking chair, three common chairs,—one lower than the others, for sewing, —a mahogany bureau, with an old-fashioned mirror above it, which had been in that very place a hundred years, and had seen—ah! what had it not seen? But most honorable of all friends is the looking-glass, that will not speak—that keeps no secret journal for future treachery—that meets you with the very face that you bring to it—that beholds all your weaknesses without chiding, and never hints advice; into whose placid depths sink, as into a sea, in utter forgetfulness, all the secrets which have figured on its face!

What if one had the power to recall from this cold and passionless glass all that it had ever seen? What if there should be a resurrection of that which has been buried in looking-glasses? Little children's faces, anxious mothers, budding girls beginning to suspect their own beauty, vain and giggling looks, grave and sad looks of those who hate to grow old, vexed looks of those who have cut themselves in shaving, timid and anxious looks of those who have been sick, double images of lovers glancing upon the sweet picture of their embrace, prim and prig pedants touching up their gray whiskers and covering their baldness with the few strawy locks yet left, simple and wondering looks of curly and wooly Phillis, whose honest, homely face is just as dear to her as if it were Cleopatra's.

Many would shrink to have their looking-glasses reveal their secrets. Certain it is that Agate Bissell would not be ashamed to have it tell all that ever she committed to its trust. Faithful, pure-thinking, upright Agate! Positive, precise, sprightly to tartness, who more than thou lived wholly for others? Who ever knew thee fail in the day of trial? When didst thou betray a secret? When didst thou ever shrink from giving honest counsel because it was bitter? Let men look upon thee, Agate, and henceforth honor those words, OLD MAID! When all things are hereafter untied and the contents of various bundles disclosed, it is my opinion that as many noble, self-denying virtues will be found tied up with precise bow-knots in some of those vertical rolls called Old Maids, as in any other that shall appear.

Open the upper drawer! Here we have few laces, one or two ornaments seldom worn, and then only as a special honor to some much honored friend. Be touched, as I am, with a certain tear-breeding feeling, to see how little the poor have to represent their finer tastes! Some jewels, however, are laid up for them hereafter.

The next drawer. This is fine linen. Not much of it! But it is as white as snow. Not a stitch is broken. How finely folded! How orderly! Agate need not be ashamed that it is so little. She makes it enough by wise economy, and what she misses, some poor shivering creature is wearing, for she is silently generous. All the fine linen of the saints, is not that which is made up into ascension robes. Some of it may yet be found in bureau drawers.

Did you ever see a room that had so little in it, that looked so comfortable? Find a speck of dirt! Yet, it is not distressingly neat. It has not that coffin and shroud snugness that you see in some rooms. It is generous and home-like. A true woman lives in it. That furnishes any room, and subdues its very walls, at length, to humane and gentle expression!

CHAPTER XI.

ROSE-CULTURE.

How happy are proud people! No. Rather how happy are people of pride! That does not hit it exactly.

How fortunate are people with a sovereign self-esteem! I appeal to every one who ever felt the quality, whether pride or self-esteem. Either of them covers or describes that peculiar faculty which inspires in men the sense of their own being, of personal worth, of eminent selfness—not necessarily selfishness.

Why are they fortunate? In such persons there is apt to be a central content. They are always consciously right. They always speak aright. Whatever they do is right. Whatever they own is of the best. Whatever submits itself to their protection is right. Right-cousness is the very quality of their experience. Why should you reason with them? It is cruel and useless —cruel to disturb such profound self-satisfaction in a world not too much given to happiness; and useless, because it is an instinct, not a conviction—an involuntary feeling, and not a deduction of reason.

But not all of this tribe of self-esteem are so happy. All the worse for them. If this potent force allies itself with conscience, the possessor may as well make up his mind to be in bondage all his life. Then the sense of ownership and self-appropriation acts chiefly in the sphere of *Duty*.

Agate Bissell could not be said to have pride of character so much as Pride of Duty. She saw everything in the light of duty, and she measured duty by the high requisitions of an intense pride. Every one may see that she had business on hand for the rest of her life. Nothing was good that had not in it some relation to duty. There was no good in the beautiful, unless in some way allied to practical duty. Happiness, springing from duty, was not altogether to be condemned; yet it must be watched, as likely to take the temper out of the cutting edge of duty.

There was no member of Dr. Wentworth's family that did not feel the pressure of honest Agate's conscience, and respect it, too. It made no difference that her good sense restrained her from meddling with other people's consciences. It is impossible for an energetic nature to move about among men under the power of any great central faculty, and not electrify them. You may carry a torch for yourself, but cannot keep the light out of other people's eyes.

"Rose, have you put away your night-clothes?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Are you sure you folded them up and laid them in their proper place?"

A smile came over Rose's fair face, for she recollected that she had laid them on a chair, and not under the pillow.

"Rose, it is just as easy to do things right as wrong. Go right up and place them as they ought to be, and then come down to your lesson." For, Rose was already a proficient with the needle, and for an hour in the morning and one in the afternoon, she was under Agate's special instruction in reading and writing. But, on Saturday the lessons were in the Scriptures and the Catechism. Rose, by nature, was one of the fortunate ones who obeyed those in command, and yet always had her own way. To suppress one tendency was only to open another. She was of a nature so full and vital, that her happiness seemed little checked because stopped in this or that direction.

"The dear child," said Agate, one day, to Mrs. Polly Marble, "is so good that I'm afraid she may not live. If she should die I don't think the Doctor would be good for much."

"I don't think you need take on 'bout it, Agate," said Mrs. Polly. "Mebbe you'll find enough human natur in her to suit you, afore you get through. I've seen just such children before. There's Hotchkiss—till his boy was ten years old, he was so good that his folks was afeered he wa'n't long for this world. Ever since, tho', they have felt easier, for if there ever was a critter that had his full share of total depravity, it is that Paul Hotchkiss. If he's ever converted, tho', he'll be a smart man, especially if he has it thorough."

"That may be true, Mrs. Marble. In this world it is not safe to trust appearances."

"That's just what I say to my deacon. You know, Miss Agate, that there never was a kinder creetur nor a better man than he is, if it wa'n't for that wicked levity. After all I've done for him, I don't see that he's got over it a mite. I tell him that nobody is sure, as long as he is livin' in this world of temptation. When a man is safely in his coffin, then we may be comfortable—that is, if he had a hope."

"I sometimes think," said Agate, "that I should like Rose better if she had a little more —well, a little more nature:—some sparks flung off now and then makes you sure there's fire, and that it is not all ashes."

"Well, I really think I shouldn't trouble myself about that. You can't tell by the way a bean comes up what sort of leaves it's goin' to have afterwards. Some children are like poke weed. When it first comes up it's just as good to bile as 'sparagus. But in a few weeks it's so strong it would drive ye out of the house, if you was to put it in the pot. Now, you know that the child is depraved. Everybody is, even ministers have it, tho' I really don't see that grace has subdued it in Dr. Buell. Of course Rose is—and I shouldn't worry a bit if I was you. It'll come out in time."

"Mrs. Marble, if there's any such thing as spoiling her, the Doctor will do it. He's the strangest man that I ever heard of. Sometimes I think his books and his foreign learning have unsettled his religious belief. Would it not be dreadful if he was unsound! I know Dr. Buell don't think so. But you ought to hear him make fun of the Catechism! I have trouble enough with the children anyhow. The other Saturday morning, after I'd got through the questions, Dr. Wentworth called Rose.

"'Rose, what do the apple-trees principally teach?'

"Rose understands her father, and her face looked funny all over; but she turned to me as if she didn't want to make fun of the catechism:

"'Answer him, Rose,' said I, 'answer your father!'

"And, do you believe it, she looked at him with her great, full eyes and said:

"'They make me think how beautiful God is!'

"The Doctor didn't ask her any more questions, but went off with her in his arms down into the garden."

"Well, Agate, you needn't be discouraged. You know you have the promises. Besides, his wife is a precious woman; and that's in your favor."

"It would almost break my trust in God, if Rose shouldn't do well. No—nothing will ever do that, I hope! But then you can't have such a child by you for six or seven years, and not have your heart bound up in her. I can tell you, Mrs. Marble, there's more dangerous idols than those made of wood and stone."

"A good deal worse! 'Eyes have they, but they see not,' saith the prophet. Now, them idols that have pretty eyes, and see out of them too, is a good deal more to be fear'd. I tell my boys so, of 'en."

"If anything *could* spoil Rose, it would be the creatures the Doctor has 'round her. It seems to me as if he contrived to pick out the very worst folks, and let Rose run with them. There is that *natural*, Pete! I do believe Rose would go from me to him any day. The Doctor lets him carry her about the meadows, and woods, and down through the swamp, by half-days together."

"Well, I'd never consent to that. I'd like to see Pete Sawmill about my house! He'd get a piece of my mind about the quickest! He don't do her any good!"

"The Doctor thinks Pete is a true child of Nature. He is not more'n half-witted anyhow. But the fellow *is* curious about knowin' all sorts of things that are going on in the woods, especially if there is no use in them."

"That's what I tell the Deacon. 'Deacon Marble,' says I, 'if you would shove out of ye all your knowins that ain't worth knowin', and then fill up with sober matter, you would be a sight better deacon, and a better man.'"

"That's much so with folks in general."

"Yes; folks' heads is pretty much like their garrets, where all the rubbish and broken things they've no use for down stairs are stored away."

"As if Pete were not enough, Tommy Taft is round with Rose, and Hiram Beers rides her out every chance he can get. There's about twenty people in this town that seems to think that they own Rose!"

No other person could be allowed to say these things but herself. Should a neighbor, or one whom she less confided in than Polly Marble, indulge in unfavorable reflections, Agate would soon enable them to understand that they were meddling with affairs which did not concern them.

Now and then, however, but with reserve, she intimated to Mrs. Wentworth her fears for Rose's "bringing up;" for if there was one thing in this whole world which Agate had determined should come to pass, and had staked her life on it, it was that "Rose should grow up good and pious."

"Do see that child! She'll be stung to death, as sure as she's alive. Rose, Rose, come away from those bees—come here this minute! I do believe that child is in league with all the animal creation. Nothing is afraid of her, and she is afraid of nothing. See her stepping up nearer and nearer to those hives! I should have had as many stings stuck into me by this time as a baked ham has cloves! She comes home with her pockets full of trash, and with vines hanging about her neck, and with her hands full of bugs and worms. I've given up trying to manage her. It's in her and it will come out. If you stop her at one thing she just goes straight off to another. And she's so good-natured and so quiet and sweet, that you never think it's wilfulness. But, she's got her father's will in her, if it is covered up. She knows what she's about."

"Only yesterday I was sitting," said her mother, "in the bow window, just as twilight was coming on,—with my sewing in my lap, it was getting too dark to see well, when Rose came marching in:—'Ma, I've got something for you.' 'Bring it here, child,' said I. And she emptied her apron into my lap, in a sober and satisfied way. Of all things in this world, it was a great toad, speckled, fat—ugh! I screamed and flounced it upon the floor. I was startled in good earnest, for if there is anything disgustful, next to a snake, or a green worm, or a spider, it is a toad."

"What did she do?"

"Do? She looked at me with surprise,—then demurely picked up the loathsome creature and walked out with it. I spoke so sharply that I was afraid I had hurt the poor child, and so I went out, and she was sitting on the offset laughing all over, as if it was the merriest experience of all her life!"

Quite unconscious of these remarks, the object of them, a chubby child of six years old, was standing by the very edge of the shelf on which scores of hives were ranged. Bees were flying out with great activity, and coming in, swinging heavily down, with laden thighs. At first a few whirled around Rose as if to warn her off. But seeing at a glance who it was, and reporting the news to their companions, their excitement and curiosity subsided, and the child was suffered to go as near as she pleased and to do as she liked. If one lit on her hand, she suffered it to creep over it undisturbed. Sometimes an in-flying bee would get caught in her hair; she took no pains to help it out; she suffered them to go and come as they would. Sometimes she would gather flowers and bring them toward the hives, and watch the workers as they eagerly sought the honey.

"That child is the doctor's own self in petticoats," said Agate Bissell. "I believe that the Doctor could stuff his pockets full of bees," said his wife, "and they would be contented. But if I go near the bee shed, the angry things fly at me as Rex does at a beggar. They know I am afraid of them. They dash at me with such a way, that I never wait to see what they mean to do, and so they chase me fairly out of that part of the garden."

"I wonder the doctor will keep them; at any rate so many. There must be as many as fifty hives, and more coming on."

"Oh, it's his music. He would not hear a word against his bees. On bright days, that are still and warm, he lies down by the window yonder on purpose to hear them hum and buzz. And, I confess, if I am only safe out of their reach, it is a pleasant sound. Though I do not want them to appropriate him or make a hive out of his hat! Do you know he looked for it yesterday a half hour, and then found it among the bees? He says Rose carried it thither. I say Rose's father did. But the doctor, you know, likes pleasant sounds, as a kind of mental stimulus. The pleasure of music, he says, consists in the thoughts and feelings which it excites in us. I don't know what bees can make him think of. But, if anything troubles him he likes to get where he can hear the bees, and then he seems to grow quiet."

"That is better than to brace up with some things," said Agate.

"After that dreadful surgical case he came home looking like a dead man. His face was stern and ghastly. He couldn't eat on that day before he operated, and trembled when he left the house like a leaf. But they say as soon as he took the knife his hand was firm and his body like steel. When he reached home I could not get him food quick enough—he almost cried for it, and was sharp and peevish, till he had eaten enough, which I thought he never could do, and then he went out by the window, where he could see the verbenas and the beds of petunia, and the rows of gladiolus, and lay down, and let the bees chant to him. I quite forgave the creatures their spite at me, when I saw how much comfort he took. After a while he fell asleep, and woke up in half an hour as fresh and merry as he always is."

"I hope Rose will have his knack of being happy. Isn't it queer that she takes so to Pete? She is so peculiar about liking and not liking. I think they are a match. He is as fond of curious notions as she is. But, then, I don't like her going off with him all day, wandering in the woods and poking into the swamps, and following brooks."

"The doctor will not have you say a word about poor Pete. He thinks him the only Christian on the place."

"Except when he's in liquor."

"Yes, he owns that he has one fault. But, then, he has such outlandish ways, and knows so much about the animal kind, and is so unfit to take care of himself; he's so foolish about everything that most folks care about, and so very knowing about things that are of no sort of use to regular and respectable people, that the doctor thinks he's inspired."

"I do wonder how so good a man as Dr. Wentworth is, should have so many queer notions. Well, we all have our faults."

It is doubtful whether Mrs. Wentworth thought so. There was not a woman in the town that hovered about her husband with such a stream of opposition as she did. She rallied him and chid him, and laughed at him; she put upon him all manner of humorous and grotesque imaginations, invented speeches and imagined situations in which the doctor figured ludicrously. But there was within it all such an unmistakable fondness, and such playfulness that no one failed to see, that she worshipped as well as loved. All this persiflage was her way of hiding or showing, as the case might be, the strength of her attachment. For all the years they had lived together, not a line was less distinct, not a color was faded, not a form was withdrawn from the picture which love first drew. One word in the morning of earnest love filled the whole day with happiness. With increasing power came also a growing sensibility. Never when he first spoke of affection was it so hard, with open face, to listen, as now after eight years of intimacy. The blush came more deeply than at first, the eye fell more quickly, the nerve trembled more freely. Whatever there was in her nature susceptible of development, was wholly commanded by her husband. She honored his strength. She rejoiced in his growing influence. She sympathized with his tastes so far as their unlike natures would permit. But to have owned these feelings would have been as impossible as to have spoken in the tongue of angels. It would seem as if, while her whole life centered upon his love, she would hide the precious secret by flinging over it vines and flowers, by mirth and raillery, as a bird hides its nest under tufts of grass, and behind leaves and vines, as a fence against prying eyes.

The garden was the doctor's paradise. Every-day, therefore, he heard from his wife some amusing narration of its conduct. Birds and insects were near of kin to him. Of course, birds and insects every day were made to answer for all manner of curious faults. Every-day the indictment varied. Now the flowers had beguiled him. Now the bees had infatuated him; now the birds had quite flown away with his wit; now Rose had bewitched him, or he had gone utterly a gadding with Pete Sawmill.

Mrs. Wentworth talked both with quickness and emphasis. Her voice was ringing, but very sweet. No fibre springing from combativeness was twined into the chord, and so its sounding was never sharp or harsh.

A single hour's acquaintance would suffice to discriminate and sharply to separate her from shallow, talkative women, whose tongues, like a turn-pike, lie open to all the travel that comes along. It was full of kindness even when bantering. It was often witty, and always shrewd. It ran on as a vine grows,—a morning glory, or a cypress vine,—twining round and round whatever it may touch, and throwing out buds and blossoms at every joint.

"There is Rose, mounted and riding. It is the last we shall see of her till dinner," said Agate Bissell.

"Longer than that. She goes out to Cathcart's, you remember, for the day. Of course Pete is her carriage."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE CARPENTERS' BALL.

ANN HUNT'S STORY.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

I was Ann Hunt—twenty-five on the to-morrow; and for eight years I had been Mark Hunt's wife, and as happy a wife as could be found in all America. My husband was a mechanic, had plenty of work, and was fond of me. To be sure he was double my age, and very serious, fond of church-going, and such things; while I was as gay as a poor girl could be, and fond of dressing in my best and going to all sorts of merry-makings. When the children began to come, all that ended for me, of course; but, after all, I never fretted over it.

I had never been discontented for more than a moment or two, I believe, until the day when Bess Creamer ran into my little kitchen, to show me a new blue tarletan she had been buying and to tell me all about the grand "Carpenters' Ball" they were to have at the big hall always hired for such purposes.

"Dancing, and music, and such a supper, and everybody there we know!" cried Bess. "But you have heard all about it before, of course. What are you going to wear?"

"To wear?" I cried.

Then Bess put her arms akimbo, in a way she had from a child, and cried out:

"Why, Ann Hunt, don't say you ain't going?"

"I haven't heard a word about it," said I.

"Why Hunt is a carpenter as well as Creamer —and all the Carpenters' Lodge are bound to go," cried Bess.

"Well, Bess," said I, "you know Mark isn't so very young, and he's trying to lay by a penny, and he don't quite approve of merry-making, I guess."

But my heart dropped like a lump of lead in my bosom, and I began to feel that my life *was* very dull and wretched, after all.

"Bother Mark and his fidgets!" said Bess. "You just coax him to take you—old Jane will mind the children for ten cents and her supper,—worry him enough, and he'll go!"

Away she went, all animation, and I sat down on a little stool and hid my face in my hands, forgetting the dinner baking in the stove-oven.

"That's what came of getting married," said I. "I'm only twenty-five, and I don't look twenty-one; and here I am tied down to a great family and a solemn old husband. If I had had more sense I might have led a different life. Take me—why, he wouldn't take me anywhere, but to prayer-meeting, for a fortune!"

I had meant to stew up a few apples to relish our pork and potatoes, but, though the fruit was on the table, the idea passed out of my mind now. I sat there thinking of the ball.

"I would have worn my green silk. It's almost new," said I, "and I wouldn't have needed much but gloves and shoes. It's contemptible of Mark—a member of the Lodge, too!"

And I cuffed the child, who came roaring to me with a broken kite.

"A woman is a fool to get married," said I. "Why, I always had beaux enough to ask me everywhere. I might still, but now it's dress the babies, and cook the dinner, and wash the dishes, and clean the house. I'd better live out at service, for I'd have my half-holidays. I don't have an hour now."

"Da-da!" cried the baby, in his high chair, at the window, "Da-da, tomin'!"

He saw his father in the street, I knew, and I jumped up and began to set the table. Always before everything had been ready just as Mark came in, but I was too sulky to care much now; and I turned to him angrily as he cried:

"Why, we're late to-day, Ann; none of the children sick, I hope!"

"They're well enough," said I. "Can't a woman be behind hand for once in her life?"

And I dashed open the oven-door. A smell of burning and a cloud of smoke rushed out at me. The pork was just a crisp. As for the potatoes in the pot, I knew they were a water-soaked mess already.

But Mark was good-natured. It was the first time I had served him so, and I had no cross words to bear, and gave a sort of apology for what had happened by telling him that Bess Creamer had been to see me.

"No wonder the dinner is spoiled, then," said Mark. "Bess has a tongue that is hard to stop. The greatest gossip about the town, and such a gad about! I pity John Creamer for his bargain. She had a pretty face—it's fading fast though,—but what else had she, I wonder?"

"Yes, Bess has a kind husband," said I.

"Kind?" cried Mark. "Why, he spends dollars every week at the tavern, and if he were to die to-morrow Bess would have to beg, for all he'd leave her."

"Perhaps so," said I; "but he lets her enjoy herself. Nowhere but she goes. She came in to shew me her ball dress just now—the dress for the Carpenters' Ball, Mark."

"I thought more than jaw burnt the pork," said Mark. "When women and dry goods get together what's to part 'em?"

"Oh," said I, "I don't care so much for clothes. I'd do with as little as any woman; but I was interested in the ball. You're a member of the Lodge, Mark—why haven't you a ticket? Isn't it thought mean?"

"Yes, it might be," said he; "for it's for the widows' and orphans' benefit the thing's got up. Of course I took tickets—two of 'em."

"Oh, you *dear* Mark!" said I. "And you wanted to surprise me?"

"Can't say I thought of you, my dear," said Mark. "I didn't calculate on either of us going?"

"Why not, Mark?" said I. "You're not so strict that you think a dance a sin."

He laughed.

"No, I aint set against dancing, though I never cared for it myself," said he. "I'm a Christian, I hope; but in a proper place amongst decent folks it can't be a crime to let your feet keep time to music. It chirps young folks up, I reckon."

"Then why not go?" said I.

"It's the children," said he. "Four of 'em all babies, you may say, and 'taint as if we had some one we could trust to leave 'em with. Then where's the use of wasting so much on finery? And then another thing: I'm going down to X—— the day before the ball to see about that new frame house they want us to build, and I sha'n't be home in time. So that settles it, you see, Ann."

"I could go with Bess and her husband," I ventured.

He looked at me angrily for almost the first time in his life.

"No," said he; "it wouldn't be proper for you to go without me. I wonder you should think of it."

I said nothing, but I was terribly angry. I kept my anger warm all day and for the next three days and nights. All my friends were going to that ball, it seemed, and I felt slighted and wretched. When Mark went away with his carpet-bag in his hand I scarcely kissed him.

He knew all about it, and his saying nothing, but just looking at me in that cool, disapproving way, made me angriest of all, and I had a plan in my mind that made me ashamed to look my husband in the face besides. For, you see, I had found the two ball tickets in Mark's coat and had made up my mind to use them. Go I would and for once enjoy myself. So the moment the train in which Mark went had rattled away out of sight, I took my purse and ran down into the village to buy my little finery and to tell every one I also was going to the Carpenters' Ball. Then I gave the children an early supper, put them to bed in a hurry, poor little things, and sat up all night to make my head-dress and re-trim my dress—for the ball was the very next evening—and I went to bed worn out and awoke late with a headache.

The day before I had sent a note to a cousin of mine, a ne'er-do-well who was always idle, and asked him to become my escort. And he came in after tea, dressed out to go, and all was ready but old Jane, the washerwoman, who had been engaged to mind the children.

Go until she came I could not, and as it grew later I fretted and fumed, and so did Cousin Will. But at last she came blundering into the kitchen, smelling of liquor and very loquacious. She had "been to her cousin's baby's funeral," she said, and it was plain to be seen she was not quite sober.

"I daren't go and leave her, Will.," I said.

But Will. cried:

"Come—it's too late now to go back. Nothing will happen to your young ones, Ann."

And I let myself be hurried into the hack he had hired. After that I had not much peace, for the vision of old Jane dropping my poor baby was continually before my eyes.

Still there was some triumph in going to the ball, and once there I danced with everybody who asked me.

"You look like a girl of eighteen. Nobody would ever guess you were sober old Mark Hunt's wife," said Cousin Will. And I was foolish to feel pleased, for I was not like myself that night and had not been since I had heard of the ball.

I danced away my anxiety about the baby as well as I could, and at last supper time came. The young fellow to whom Will had introduced me took me down. There was a crowd [illegible] the table, of course, and while we were making our way toward our seats we had to stand awhile jammed in between some couples, all waiting their turns as we were.

Just in front of me was a man who had come in a few moments before. He was apologizing to the girl he walked with, who seemed to be his sweetheart.

"I couldn't come sooner, Em.," he said. "They kept us late at the office, and coming up there was a fire in Pear sreet. That always turns a man out of his way. I stopped to look. It was a dreadful fire, I tell you; all those new frame houses put up last year—the two-story ones, you know. Some lives lost, they say."

I waited to hear no more.

"Get me out—let me go," I screamed to my companion. "It is where I live," and I fought back through the crowd, and, with Will. at my heels in my ball-dress and bare-headed, ran out into the street. The music had drowned the noise within, but once outside I heard the screams of fire, and the rush of engines, and saw the mad, red flames against the sky.

A man I knew by sight was running past. I caught his arm:

"Stop, Mr. Baron," I cried; "it isn't my home?"

"Who's this?" he uttered. "Who the—— Well, good heavens, Mrs. Hunt! I'm afraid it is. Where's Hunt?"

But I did not answer. I was already running toward the fire, and in ten minutes I saw a sight that froze the blood in my veins. The fine little frame houses, all one red blaze; mere shells of houses already. Then I was like a mad-woman.

"My children!" I cried, "would no one save my children?"

And I flung myself to the ground, for there were neither floors nor stairways left, only the hollow ruins.

"Oh, let me die!" I cried. And a hand touched my arm, and some one said:

"Ann!"

I looked up. Mark Hunt was bending over me. Mark Hunt, my husband.

"Kill me, Mark," I said, "Oh, kill me! The babies are burned to death. My little darlings, and I—I have murdered them."

But he lifted me and bore me out of the crowd to a little vacant spot of ground, and there nestling around a heap of blankets I saw my darlings,—my girl and boy holding the baby between them. Tearful and frightened, but alone and quite unhurt. I knelt down and thanked God for it, and then Mark told me all.

He had felt uneasy, and had finished his business with all speed, and hastened homeward just in time to save his children from the flames. Old Jane had left them and gone rummaging in the closet—for liquor, I suppose—and set fire to a shelf, and but for Mark's coming when he did, no life could have been saved.

As it was, the house he had toiled to earn, and the furniture and all that we possessed in the world, had been sacrificed to the flames; and though he said—and truly:

"What did that matter, if our children were but saved?"

I felt that I had caused it all. He was very kind and forgave me, and I helped him all I could, and now we have our home again, and are beforehand with the world once more; and from that day I valued home and its sweet duties, and never grieved that my lot was not a gayer one, thinking what might have happened, and from what I had been saved.

"And that," said Ann Hunt, "is my story, and the only one I ever had to tell, for nothing else has ever happened me to interest anybody."

—Love, like the plague, is often communicated by clothing and money.

STAY, DARLING, WITH THY BEAUTY.

(A SUMMER SONG.)

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

At least not *now* must sorrow's cloud
Born of the wrongful years surround—
Earth's joyful bosom fills with flowers
And Heaven is with the sunlight crowned:

I will that demon Past forget,
While wandering in these scenes divine,
The free trill at her sweetest song
And thy responsive hand in mine.

Darling, with thy grand beauty stay
Amid the realms of rose and bird,
Thou diadem of this Paradise,
With such consoling music stirred!

O, when I look into thy eyes
So soft, so beautifully blue,
And when I hear thy thoughtful voice
In every tone so sweetly true—

Those eyes that are Affection's own,
That voice a prophesy that yet
Even the Ghost of ill shall die
And rainbows on its grave be set—

Yes, when such perfect Heaven glows,
With sunlit nature, here from thee,
Aught but a rapturous Faith would cloud
The coward heart in blasphemy.

THE DETECTIVE'S STORY.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

It was a dull, rainy day, towards the end of August—one of those days when earth and sky alike are gray and dreary, and the rain-drops pattering against the window sound like human sobs. The clock that hung against the wall pointed to the hour of three in the afternoon, and I was sitting by myself in our little inner office, looking out at the expanse of dull, gray wall that formed my only prospect from the not over-clean window, and thinking. I had read every square inch of type in the newspapers; I had made out all the necessary papers and documents, and now with, literally, "nothing to do," I was musing about Kitty Elton, and wondering how long it would be before I should be able to marry her.

Dear little Kitty! she was as sweet and patient as it was in the nature of woman to be, but I knew it was a hard life for her in that overcrowded milliner's work-room, day after day and month after month, and I longed to set her free from the monotonous captivity. She was a pretty, blue-eyed girl of twenty, with a dimple in her chin and the sweetest roses on her cheeks that ever inspired the pen of poet. I was no poet, yet I think I understood and appreciated all her womanly grace and delicate beauty as fully as if my heart's thoughts could shape themselves into verse. And it was of them I was thinking when the door opened, and Mr. Clenner came in.

Mr. Clenner was our "chief"—a dark, silent, little man, with a square, stern mouth and clouded gray eyes, which appeared almost expressionless when they were turned full upon you, and yet which seemed to see everything at one comprehensive glance. He sat down beside me.

"Meredith," he said, in the quiet, subdued tone that was natural to him, "didn't you say you were getting tired of doing nothing?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I have something for you to do."

"What is it, sir?"

"Something that will bring you both credit and friends, if you manage it skillfully. I had intended to go myself, but circumstances happen untowardly, and I shall send you instead."

Bending his head towards me and speaking scarcely above a whisper, he told me the special business on which I was to be sent. There had been, it seems, a series of very heavy forgeries lately committed, with a boldness and audacity that fairly seemed to set the authorities at defiance. For some time he had been in doubt as to the exact perpetrator of the crime, but after much quiet investigation and casting hither and thither, he had detected the hidden spring,—one Pérley Matteson—who had skillfully eluded all pursuit and was now somewhere hiding in the north-eastern portion of the State. His whereabouts had been ascertained as nearly as possible, and it was for me now to go quietly up and apprehend him, before he should become aware of our knowledge of all his movements.

I sat listening to the various details of our plan as they were sketched out by Mr. Clenner. The reward that had been privately offered was high—my heart leaped as I reflected how much nearer it would bring me to Kitty Elton,—nor did the enterprise seem particularly difficult to accomplish.

"Do you think you can do it?" Mr. Clenner asked, after the whole thing had been laid before me.

"Yes, sir. When shall I start?"

"Now—within half an hour!"

"Within half an hour, sir?"

"Yes; why not?"

I could think of no sufficient reason except one, which I did not care to communicate to my superior,—the longing wish to see Kitty once more before I started.

"Just as you decide, Mr. Clenner, of course," I said, rising. "If I take the four o'clock express, I shall be there by daylight to-morrow morning."

"Yes, and that is altogether the best plan. He will not remain long in any one place just at present, depend upon it, and what you have to do must be done at once."

All through that long night journey, I mused upon the task that lay before me. The house to which I was directed was in the midst of woods, about half a mile beyond the village of Drownville—the residence of Mrs. Matteson, the mother of the audacious forger. If help was needed I was fully authorized to call for it upon the constabulary authorities of Drownville; but I expected to need none.

The rosy dawn was just flushing the eastern sky when I alighted, stiff, weary and jaded from the train, at the little way-station of Drownville.

"Can you direct me to Mrs. Matteson's place?" I asked of the sleepy station-master, who was yawning behind the little aperture of the ticket office.

"Matteson—Mrs. Matteson; I don't know her, but I guess likely I can tell you where she lives. Just you follow the main street of the village out, about a half a mile, and ye'll come to a patch o' woods, with bars at the fence. Go through them bars a little way further on, and you'll see a little yaller house, just the last place in the world where you'd expect to see a house. That's where Mrs. Matteson lives."

I thanked my informant, and set out on a brisk walk, carrying my travelling-bag. It was quite a distance ere I emerged from the suburbs of the "main street" into a quiet and secluded country road, or rather lane. The "patch o' woods" with the bars, and the "little yaller house"—a cream-colored cottage, literally overgrown with honeysuckles—duly rewarded my search, and as I knocked at the door, a clock somewhere inside struck seven.

A decent-looking, elderly woman in widow's weeds came to the door.

"Is Mr. Matteson in? Mr. Perley?"

"No," she answered quickly, with, as I imagined, rather a confused look. I did not believe her and asked, quietly:

"When do you expect him home?"

"Not at present."

Apparently she expected I would go away, but, instead, I stepped in.

"Mother," asked a soft voice at the head of the stairs, "who is it?"

And then for the first time I became aware that some one had been watching our colloquy from the head of the stairs—a young girl dressed like the mother in deep black, with very brilliant eyes, and a profusion of jet-black ringlets.

"Some one to see your brother."

She came half way down the stairs, pushing back her curls with one hand, and looking at me with wondering eyes. Even then her beauty struck me as I stood gazing at her.

"Perley is not at home," she said, hurriedly. "He has gone away. We do not know when he will return."

Evidently this mother and daughter were in the secret of Matteson's villainy, and doing their best to screen him from its consequences. My heart bled for both of them; but it was no time to indulge in sentimental pity. Speaking as briefly as I could, I told them it was my duty to compel them to remain where they were, while I searched the house.

Mrs. Matteson sat down pale and trembling; her daughter colored high.

"Mother," she said, "why do you stand by and listen to such slanders? It is false! Let this man search the house if he will; my brother Perley is as innocent as I am!"

No opposition was offered to my search. It was entirely fruitless, however—there was nowhere any trace of the flown bird. Nevertheless I concluded to remain there quietly for a day or two, to see what a little waiting might bring forth.

That same afternoon Clara Matteson came in, as I sat by the piazza window, keeping a quiet watch on all the surroundings.

"Mr. Meredith," she said, softly, "mother thinks I have been very rude to you. She says it is not your fault, personally, that you are sent here on—on such a mistake, and perhaps she is right. I am very sorry if I have hurt your feelings."

The pretty, penitent way in which she spoke quite won my heart, and a few questions on my part seemed to unlock the hidden recesses of her confidence. She talked at first shyly, but afterwards with more assurance, of herself, the absent brother, and her mother, giving me a thousand artless little family details which I almost dreaded to hear. That twilight talk was one of the pleasantest episodes of my by no means universally pleasant life, and I was considerably annoyed when it was broken in upon by the arrival of the Drownville constables who were to watch through the night. At the sound of their footsteps on the piazza floor Clara rose up and sat down again, confused and frightened.

"O, Mr. Meredith—those men——"

"Be easy, Miss Matteson," I said; "you shall in no way be annoyed by them. Your privacy shall not be broken in upon, believe me."

"I know I am silly," faltered Clara, "but oh! it seems so dreadful!"

My orders to the men were brief and succinct. I stationed them as seemed best to me, and then returned to spend the evening with Miss Matteson. And when I was at length left alone I could not help thinking—God forgive me—how much more winning and graceful she was than poor Kitty Elton.

At length an answer came to my report to Mr. Clenner—it was short and to the purpose:

"Come back. You are only losing time. If the bird has flown we must look elsewhere for him."

I read the brief missive with a pang. Clara Matteson's cheek deepened in color as I announced my departure to her.

"You have been far kinder than we dared to hope, Mr. Meredith," she said, as I held her hand in mine.

"You will think of me sometimes, Clara?"

The reader will easily perceive how our intimacy had progressed. She smiled, hung her head, and taking a pair of scissors from the table, severed one bright black curl from the abundant tresses that hung over her forehead.

"Keep this, Mr. Meredith, in memory of me."

Was I foolish to press the jetty ringlet to my lips ere I laid it closely against my heart. Clara evidently thought I was—for she laughed, but did not seem displeased.

Mr. Clenner seemed annoyed when I got back to the Bureau—rather an unreasonable proceeding on his part, for I had certainly done all that man could do, under the circumstances.

"We have been mistaken all the way through, it seems," he said, biting his lip. "Strange—very strange—I never was mistaken before in my calculations. Well, we must try again!"

I went to Kitty Elton's that night. She received me with a sweet, shy gladness of welcome that should have made me the happiest man in all the world; but it did not. Clara Matteson's dark beauty seemed to stand between me and her like a visible barrier. When I took leave, there were tears in her blue eyes.

"Kitty, you are crying!"

"Because you are changed, Edward. You do not love me as well as you did!"

"Kitty, what nonsense!"

I was vexed with her, simply because I knew her accusation was true. But I kissed her once more, and took my leave, moody and dissatisfied.

When I reached the office next morning Mr. Clenner was not there.

"He has gone to Drownville," said my fellow detective; "he went last night."

"To Drownville!"

I was seriously annoyed. Did Mr. Clenner distrust the accuracy of my reports? Or did he imagine that I was unable to institute a thorough and complete investigation of the premises?

"It's very strange," I mused aloud.

Jones laughed.

"Well," he said, "you know Clenner has a way of doing strange things. Depend upon it, he has good reasons for his conduct."

I was sitting at my desk, two days subsequently, when the door glided noiselessly open and Clenner himself entered.

"You are back again, sir? and what luck?"

"The best."

"You don't mean to say you've got him?"

"I *do* mean to say it. Edward Meredith, I knew I could not be so entirely mistaken. Perley Matteson is in the next room—half an hour from now he will be in prison."

I felt myself alternately flush and grow pale.

"Where did you apprehend him?"

"At home in his mother's house."

"But——"

"He was there all the time you remained there. Ned, my boy, you've made a blunder for once; don't let it happen again!"

"What do you mean, sir?"

For reply he opened the door of the private inner apartment, his own special sanctum. A slight boyish figure leaned against the window smoking a cigarette, with black curls tossed back from a marble white brow, and brilliant eyes. He mockingly inclined his head as I stared at him, with a motion not entirely unfamiliar to me.

"Clara Matteson!"

"Yes," he said, in a soft, sarcastic voice. "Clara Matteson, or Perley Matteson, or whatever you choose to call me! Many thanks for your politeness, Detective Meredith; and if you would like another lock of hair——"

I turned away, burning scarlet, while Mr. Clenner closed the door.

"Never mind, my boy, it will be a good lesson to you," he said, laughing. "He makes a very pretty girl, but I am not at all susceptible!"

What a double-dyed fool I had been! I had lost the reward—fallen in the estimation of my fellow-officers—and behaved like a brute to poor Kitty—and all for what?

I went to Kitty and told her the whole story, and to my surprise the dear, faithful little creature loved me just as well as ever.

"I won't be jealous of Perley Matteson, Edward," she said, smiling, "whatever I might be of his sister! And, dearest, don't be discouraged. I'll wait as long as you please, and you will be a second Mr. Clenner yet!"

She was determined to look on the bright side of things, this little Kitty of mine! But I felt the mortification none the less keenly, although, as Mr. Clenner said, it would undoubtedly prove a good lesson to me.

Perley Matteson's girlish beauty is eclipsed in State's Prison now,—nor do I pity him! The stake for which he played was high—and he lost!

MARION'S STRANGE FATE.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

My first knowledge of Marion Ladernay commenced at the time her husband drove straight off the cliff at S. and was drowned. Poor young thing, years short of twenty, and scarcely six months' married, how I pitied her!

With this pity, however, I gladly accepted the mitigations which the public discussions of the event afforded. I heard that Marion was humbly born, and, with no dower but her beauty, had married one who, at least, was heir to, as was supposed, considerable wealth, and a name that had once been honored. But his father was a man corrupt with unnumbered vices. He himself had in that wild, fearful storm driven off the cliff while intoxicated. He had gone to his doom as the beast goes—unconscious. Ah! if only he had possessed no soul!

I was young then, had never known sorrow terrible like this, and felt as if it were more than mortal woman could endure. Very timidly, but anxiously, I went to offer to Marion such condolences as my pity prompted and she would accept. And thus I first knew Marion Ladernay. How she clung to that poor wreck, soaked, bruised and beaten, that was all that remained to her of her husband. It was long ere she could be brought to acknowledge that this was not all that the waters and the jagged rocks had left undestroyed.

I found Marion, as others had said, (with a strange, undetermined shrug of the shoulder and turn of the face,) beautiful. But it was a large, grand beauty which these plain country folk did not well understand. Her massive cheek and brow were swart and brune. "She is a great black thing," I heard, but never a word of the beautifully moulded arms, the columnar neck, the bust like a sculptor's dream of loveliness, the small lissome hands which six months of rest from the hard deforming toil that Marcus had interdicted had made smooth and soft, with pink, shell-like palms and pearly nails.

To me she was a miracle of beauty, and I said so; and when I said that she was well rid of the beastly young drunkard and his dreadful father, at least the latter part of my speech was favorably received.

Marion was at her father's. She had never removed thence, for even Marcus had too much respect for the woman he had married to bring her into home communications with his father. The old man, with the saving grace of tenderness for the memory of the son he had helped to ruin, had desired her to come to his home, but she had refused, clinging to her parents since the husband she loved was gone, and had thus incurred the wrath of old Ladernay. In the interview he had been fearfully blasphemous, and more like himself than before since the death of Marcus.

"She won't live with me, but I like her after all;" the old wretch had said. "Mark didn't bring her to our house. I 'spose he thought I wasn't fit for her to live with, and I guess I aint. Anyhow, though I swore at her awfully, I believe she was right, and 'twon't prevent my being kind to her in any other way she'll let me."

And, graceless old reprobate as he was, he kept his word.

Especially was this the case when, not many months later, he learned that Marion had made him a grandfather. There were two little ones—Mark's children. She called them Marcus and Marius, and old Ladernay was well pleased. They and their mother were beautifully lodged and cared for. He kept them well provided with money and all it could buy, and was very fond of his grandchildren, visiting them every week, or oftener if they were ill, and there was a marked change for the better in him from that hour. He was never careless of his money, any more; never threw it away; dressed and behaved in a way that showed his respect for his son's widow, and a determination that the little boys, at least, should have no cause to despise him.

And Marion was as happy as a queen should be, and is supposed to be. She had come into her kingdom, and Marcus and Marius would have theirs by and by. They were beautiful boys. The mother's tender sadness which had overwhelmed their young days, seemed to have refined their characters. They were not what one would have expected of Marcus Ladernay's children, and were docile, obedient, kind to their mother, as to every one, but loving her with an exceeding affection beyond words.

Yes, despite the shadows which once seemed to hover over the fate of Marion Ladernay, she was one of the happiest of women. From the time of her marriage she was employed in laying the foundation of an education. In her widowhood she pursued the path on which she had commenced. Her aims were lofty, her purposes good. By the time her boys were old enough to be taught from books, she was well fitted for the task, and for years they had no instructor but their mother.

Old Ladernay looked on and admired. He had become quite a respectable man by this time. Mark's death, his daughter-in-law's worth, and the charms of the boys, had worked this great change in him. The greatest treat he could enjoy, now, was to be allowed to sit, quiet and silent by, while Marion taught the boys. His manner to her was always affectionate and respectful, and the little lads were as the "apples of his eyes." They never heard from him a rude, or profane word. As far as they knew, he was the model of a grandfather. He was their earthly Providence. Their mother was the minister of Providence.

To outward view all Marion's sorrows had turned to joys. All her evil had been overruled for good.

So much I knew before the time came when I left my childhood's home for that of my husband, and the far scenes upon the Pacific coast which encompassed it.

I was nearing thirty when I thus commenced my new life, while the younger Marion, so long my intimate friend, at twenty-seven, was a fair young matron with her ten-year old boys. So I left her when the ship sailed away with me and my new hopes, and my best beloved, toward my new, waiting home on the Pacific slopes.

Then the old life with all its joys, experiences, occupations seemed to fade away. Parents and familiar friends were not forgotten, but they faded like the unreal inhabitants of a dream, and were thought of as things of the past, so different from the actual life of the present that stirred about me.

Ten years had passed when I came home. Few things made this lapse of time so apparent as the changes in Marion's family. The old Ladernay was dead, had gone humbly to his last home, hoping in the promised mercy and pardon. He had long changed from the old habitudes and vices. Tiny hands, and the grave, sweet smile on the mother's face, had led him. His penitence had borne fruit on earth, and—in Heaven. There was no doubt of that, for if late, it was sincere.

The children of his son were his heirs. Marion, their mother, was their guardian. The old Ladernay place was her home, and there, she and her boys had been very happy for two or three years, before that awful storm of war had swept over the land, and had made so many homes desolate.

The third year of the war had arrived when I came home, and that summer Marion was also at her own home which had been shut up much of the time since the war commenced. One beautiful young life had gone out of it never to return. Both Marcus and Marius had been soldiers. Marcus had been wounded, and captured, in one of the great battles more than a year before. Healthy always, but delicately organized, he had not been able to bear the sufferings of imprisonment, and so, calm and outwardly cheerful to the last, he had faded away, and breathed out the existence that had lost its charm.

It was to a very desolate home that Marion had now returned. She expected Marius soon to join her there for a long furlough, which had been granted him.

He had been wounded, and she had nursed him many months in hospital. She had made herself useful in every possible sphere that opened to her. She had done much, suffered much, sacrificed much. How much, only those who, in a lofty ideal patriotism, have yielded their hearts' deepest treasures—all that earth held of excellence and beauty—can estimate.

We renewed our old intimacy, and I devoted much of my time to her and to Marius. Those were sad days, and, nevertheless, they were happy ones. Women had learned, in the great struggle, many large, heroic ideas. How to give, and give, and make their sacrifice most roundly complete, most of all. She spoke of Marcus always with a reverential tenderness. He was yet living, ever fresh and young in the eternal abodes, though not for her. They yet should meet—she never spoke of their parting as if definite and illimitable.

And Marius was left. Upon him were lavished all the tenderness and care which belonged to the dual lives. As for him the phenomenon, not unusual, was observed. In wrenching asunder those twin lives his soul seemed maimed and wounded, almost beyond cure. It seemed at times as if a part of the great indivisible central life that belonged almost equally to the two brothers, still clung to the immortal being who had been removed beyond this sphere, and Marius, in a strange, trance-like state, had some times to be recalled to a recognition of the actual life around him.

My husband was then in the army, a surgeon in one of the California regiments, and I consulted him in my letters as to the condition of Marius. It was his opinion that this was abnormal, and almost entirely caused by his long grieving, and the depressed tone of his system. Nursing and the pleasures and comforts of home life would do more to restore him than anything else.

Marion and I devoted ourselves to him, watching and hoping. My dear, noble mother was dead, my father enfeebled in mind, almost imbecile, no longer capable of deriving pleasure from my presence. I was at liberty, therefore, to fly from the sadly-changed home of my youth and minister to the restoration of the broken young life.

It was a happy ministry, and the lad seemed to rally, and we thought him on the high road to recovery. His mother brightened under this hope, and spite the mournful sadness that had never left her face since the dreadful fate of Marcus, she seemed irradiated with a new light. After a time I learned what it was.

Marion now, at seven and thirty, was a magnificent woman. Twenty years ago she had wakened from her bright dream of young love. She had grown far beyond the image and superscription of Marcus Ladernay imprinted upon her heart; as much beyond as the stately, grand, dignified woman was beyond the immature girl of seventeen who had been left a widow. And now, at last, she loved again, and worthily. General Greyson, availing himself of the first brief chance of escape from the exigencies of the service, came quite suddenly and unexpectedly to see her.

And then the last fatal tragedy of her mournfully checkered fate occurred.

I had left her over-night with the soft moonlight smile on her face that was the signal of her joy. At morning I found her stricken and raving in an immitigable sorrow. Two sorely-wounded men lay in her house—a veteran with many a thread of silver in his dark locks; a fair-haired stripling, with curls of palest brown that floated wildly upon his pillow.

General Greyson had been met at the entrance of the grounds by Marius, to whom he addressed some questions about his mother's presence within. And Marius, looking in the face of the new-comer, had uttered an eldritch schreech, and sprung upon him with wild passion.

Even the general himself could hardly tell what followed. But so much was certain. A few minutes later, both, bleeding and desperately wounded, were borne within the house.

There were few hopes of Marius' recovery, and the general was looked upon as his unintentional murderer.

It was a sad, sad house. Marius was found not to have been seriously wounded, but was quite delirious. As soon as able he was removed to a celebrated asylum for the insane, but the general's life was despaired of. In the fierce onslaught of his assailant he had been unable, at first, to defend himself. And in the struggle, the wounds he inflicted had been slight; although he was unaware who was, or what, the cause of the attack.

No need to tell the whole sad story of this trouble. Marius won slowly back to health of body; but his mind is still, the physicians say, hopelessly diseased. It was long before General Greyson left the shadows of his darkened room, and stood painless in the free air of heaven. Marion, for once, was obstinate. She long refused to see him, holding her fell purpose long after I, in full understanding of the furious struggle, would have told her all.

But time, when one's heart is a pleasing adjunct, works even greater miracles than this. When she had seen him at last, by chance, this tired and suffering woman relented. There was a full interchange of confidences. She was alone—she needed sympathy and help. Above all, she loved him. He had not consciously harmed her.

They were married when the war ended. She suffers still; but the Healer is doing his work gently. Marius will perhaps never recover. He seems scarcely to live on this earth, and he will perhaps soon be set free. I know not the future, but I think Marion will be happy yet.

◆

—Where there is much pretension, much has been borrowed. Nature never pretends.

WIT AND HUMOR.

A BEAUTIFUL Parisian girl called on a lawyer of that city noted for his sagacity, to learn how she could compel a certain gentleman, with whom she had fallen in love, to marry her whether or no. "You must contrive to remain alone with him, Mademoiselle, three times, and fifteen minutes each time, and have good proof of the fact," said the lawyer. "Very well, Monsieur," replied the girl. She called twice more on the lawyer, remaining alone with him about twenty minutes on each occasion, and at the close of the last interview informed the astonished man that *he* was the person she was after, and that she had her witnesses all on hand in the entry. He married her and was happy.

AN unfortunate bachelor, in the northern part of New Hampshire, who had made many unsuccessful attempts to get a wife, at last succeeded, by the irresistible temptation of a $15 silver watch, in inducing a high-tempered old maid to marry him. The ceremony having been duly performed at the house of the bride's father, the happy husband proposed an immediate return *home*. "Home!" exclaimed the bride; "*home!* This is *my* home, and you'd better go to *your'n*. I agreed to *marry* you for the watch; but I wouldn't *live* with you *for a town clock!*"

A FARMER in Ohio, who had sold a steer and received his pay therefor in greenbacks, rolled up the bills into a small compass and put them into his tobacco box. When he took his next quid, he put the little roll of greenbacks in his mouth instead of an allowance of tobacco, and not being able to extract any of the savory juices of "the leaf" therefrom, he took it out, and on examination discovering his mistake, exclaimed, "Blast the luck!—*a hull steer at one chaw!*"

A HOSTLER was sent to the stable to bring out a traveller's horse, but not knowing which of the two strange horses in the stalls belonged to the traveller, and wishing to avoid the appearance of ignorance in his business, he saddled both animals, and brought them to the door. The traveller pointed out his own horse, saying, "That's my nag." "Certainly, yer honor, I know *that* very well," said the hostler, "but I didn't know which was the other gentleman's."

IN a law suit in Georgia, in regard to the delivery of a certain lot of corn, a freedman testified as follows: "I know no mor'n dis. De pertractyrs, de commanders and de allamanders, sent me on for to answer to de corn. I delivered de corn at Williams' stable and disclaimed, 'here's Muccoy's corn.' Dey sent on de answer all right, and dat's all de prefixes of de circumstances known by de dray-man."

A KENTUCKY editor, in commenting upon the suicide of a member of Congress from that State, gravely says that "those who observed him closely before his death, came to the conclusion that he was insane, *one of his marked peculiarities being an uncontrollable desire to speak at great length!* a fact which it would be well for his surviving fellow-members to ponder."

ABUSE OF TERMS.—A traveller stopped on his way by a torrent, asked a villager, on the opposite bank, to show him a ford. "Go to the right," shouted the countryman. The traveller accordingly took the right, and was drowned. The other ran up, crying—"Oh, how unfortunate! I did not tell him to go to *his* right, but *mine!*"

A CLIMAX.—I stood in the deserted halls of my father—I gazed round on the bare walls, and down the hollow-sounding corridors—I cried aloud—"The friends of my early youth—where are they?—where?" and echoed answered—"*Really, I don't know!*"

A FRENCH officer quarreling with a Swiss, reproached him with his country's vice of fighting on either side for money, "while we Frenchmen," said he, "fight for honor." "Yes, sir," replied the Swiss, "every one fights for that which he most wants."

A YOUNG lady, on being asked where was her native place, replied, "I have none; I am the daughter of a Methodist minister," referring to the frequent "change of base" which Methodist clergymen have to make.

"HUSBAND, I hope you have no objection to my getting weighed?" "Certainly not, my dear; but why ask the question?" "Only to see, my love, if you would allow me to have my *weigh* for once."

WHY is a young lady, anxious for her lover to "propose," like a person who wants to see the delegation from Japan? Because she wants to see the *chap on knees* (Japanese.)

CURRENT ITEMS.

A VALUABLE BRIDE.—A young lady who was recently married in this city, is mentioned as having been worth, "in lace and jewels, as she stood before the altar, not less than eighty thousand dollars! Her husband, who is very rich, felt proud of his charming bride, and very much regretted, *for her sake*, to learn that her jewelry and laces had been borrowed for the occasion."

IN the western counties of Iowa, wherever there is a new-sown field, it is covered with pigeons greedily picking up the grain. Forty-acre fields are thus covered with them, and they pay no attention to guns, missiles, or clubs, so hungry do they seem. In many cases, the fields have been so stripped of the seed-grain by the pigeons, that they will have to be resown.

A GENTLEMAN in a suburban town recently buried his sixth wife. Shortly after the funeral he met the minister who officiated, and offered him a two-dollar greenback. The minister declined to take it, saying he was not accustomed to accept pay for such services. The gentleman coolly replied, "Just as you say; but that's what I've been in the habit of paying."

A TERRIBLE operation was lately performed on the poor little Prince Imperial, of France. His leg was disarticulated at the knee-joint—which means that the lower joint was removed from its socket—so as to enable the surgeons directly to reach the cause of the malady from which he had suffered so much. He is now said to be recovering rapidly.

THE body of a young lady who had disappeared mysteriously from her home in Brandon, Vt., several months ago, was found a few days since on a mountain about four miles from her father's house, whither it is supposed she had wandered, and perished in a fit of mental derangement, she being subject to such fits.

DESTITUTION AT THE SOUTH.—A letter from South Carolina, in speaking of the indifference of the inhabitants to politics, says: "The truth is, that these people are so tortured with debt and poverty, that they hardly mind anything which has not a direct relation to getting daily bread and necessary raiment."

ACCOUNTS from Italy state that the privilege of marriage conferred by the government on monks, priests and nuns, has been hailed and acted upon with such enthusiasm by the parties for whose benefit it was intended, as threatens to break up all the nunneries and monasteries in the kingdom.

A MAN in Vermont lost his wife by death on the 15th of March, and on the 1st of April married again. After the notice of the marriage in the local paper, he had the suggestive saying appended: "Procrastination is the thief of time." Rather a heartless piece of business all round.

TWO men in Baxter street, in this city, got to quarrelling over the price of a kitten which one had sold the other, and the seller at last struck the buyer over the head with a heavy bludgeon, and fractured his skull, and then fled, carrying the kitten with him.

A HORSE attached to a wagon ran away in the Third avenue on Saturday of last week, smashed a buggy containing two doctors, upset a bird show, frightened a lady into a fainting fit, and finally brought up, badly injured, against a street-car.

AN INDUSTRIOUS COMMUNITY.—The inhabitants of the town of Cambridge, Vt., less than two thousand in number, sent 540,000 lbs. of butter to market last year, and made over sixty tons of maple sugar in March and April of the present year.

A LITTLE boy only twelve years old, and living at Royalton, N. Y., recently committed suicide by hanging, because his father reproved him severely for keeping fifty cents which had been given to him to hand to another boy.

A WOMAN resident in the family of a gentleman living in Beacon street, Boston, fell through a skylight, a distance of sixty feet, to a marble entry floor, and was so terribly mangled that she died in about a half an hour.

IT is estimated that over five thousand cattle, besides great numbers of sheep and hogs, and many horses, have been drowned in the inundated region between the Atchalafaya and Mississippi rivers.

A YOUNG man committed suicide in Portland on account of domestic troubles, who had been married less than a month.

NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 1867.

We always stop the Ledger at the expiration of the year, or of the time for which it is paid, so that if you wish to continue it, it would be well to renew your subscriptions at least one week before the time expires.

No Travelling Agents.—We employ no travelling agents. If any party pretends to act as such for us, you can put him down as a swindler.

We cannot change the address of a subscriber, unless he gives us his *former* as well as his present address.

Rejected Manuscripts.—We will not return rejected manuscripts.

OUR TERMS.

Single copies, $3 per annum; four copies, $10, which is $2.50 a copy; eight copies, $20. The party who sends us $20 for a club of eight copies, (all sent at one time,) will be entitled to a copy *free*. Postmasters and others who get up clubs, in their respective towns, can afterwards add single copies at $2.50. No subscriptions taken for a less period than one year. Canada subscribers must send twenty cents in addition to the subscription, to pay the American postage. When a draft or money-order can conveniently be sent, it will be preferred, as it will prevent the possibility of the loss of money by mail. The postage on the *Ledger* to all parts of the country is only twenty cents a year, or five cents a quarter, payable at the office where the paper is delivered.

☞ We employ no travelling agents. Address all communications to

ROBERT BONNER, Publisher,
No. 90 Beekman street, New York.

ADVICE TO YOUNG MEN:

Being a Series of Twelve Articles, by the Presidents of Twelve of the Principal Colleges in the United States.

No. IV.

HINTS UPON HISTORICAL READING.

BY REV. D. R. GOODWIN, D.D., PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Our relations in time and space are of primary importance and universal practical interest. They enter as an element or condition into almost all the objects of human thought. They are the formal conditions of our finite existence. They lie at the foundation of the abstract sciences, geometry and arithmetic, and as man widens his observation they stretch out into immensity.

In mounting to the summit of its generalizations, the mind advances by a process of abstraction and selection,—neglecting the details and holding fast only the leading facts and principles. The mind does not and cannot carry along with it all the minutiæ of every part. And the greater the distance to which it stretches its views, the wider asunder are the points thus selected, viz., the termini of the diverging rays.

If we turn back upon the process and select some portion for special study, that which is nearest is not only the most convenient, but the most interesting and the most important. Our first selection, therefore, for more minute examination in the whole range of our relations in time and space will naturally be Geography and History.

But even in this restricted sphere we must still further limit ourselves. We cannot acquire a minute acquaintance with every spot on the surface of the globe. We must give our chief attention to that which more nearly concerns ourselves and our own interests, our own country and its relations. We must *select*. In reading history similar principles must be applied. To know all the details of the universal history of man, is, for one mind, simply impossible.

The lower animals, whatever powers of mind analogous to ours they may be supposed to possess, have little conception of history, of the history of past generations. So with infants. So in a great degree with savages. But *man*, developed man, has a faculty of reason "which looks before and after." History is his appropriate province and one of his characteristic functions. A world-consciousness is the prerogative of civilized man. Hence the *dignity* of history.

History has manifold attractions and utilities, —exciting narrative, vivid descriptions, development of character, instructive examples, esthetic combinations. All these are well, but sometimes are set too high;—they do not constitute the principal claim of history upon our attention. Most of these purposes, fiction may and does answer as well as history. Parables, fables, mythologies, dramas, epics, novels, *may* be as amusing, as exciting, and perhaps as instructive as history. But history is the great drama of humanity, written by the finger of God; of which fictions are but feeble and fragmentary imitations. Yet the peculiar value of history does not lie, as is commonly supposed, in this, that it is a story of real *facts*. Mere facts may be as valueless as fictions. There must be a selection of facts under some guiding principle and with a view to some important end. Wars and battles, revolutions and court intrigues, and imperial fortunes and changing dynasties, are not the principal thing in history—not what raises it above the interest and value of fiction. The growth of Arts, Science, Literature and Religion; practical inventions and developments; social, intellectual and moral phenomena and progress, lie much nearer the heart of history.

Why should not these themes be as attractive as the other? They might be, and very often they would be, if the education of the young were begun aright.

The reading of history should be begun early. It is the natural and proper study of youth. If it has been neglected, the sooner the defect is repaired the better. No young man should indulge in the reading of fiction, until he has learned to relish the reading of history.

The problems which constitute the leading objects and highest interest of a manly study of history, and with reference to which our selection of historical reading should be made are three: (1.) Our own origin, how we came to be here, and to be what we are. (2.) The progress of mankind as a race to their present state of development and culture; and (3.) The advancement of man towards the accomplishment of his highest, his spiritual destinies.

The study of history is both analogous and complementary to that of geography. Chronology is to History what an outline map, adjusted to latitude and longitude, is to geography. A compend of Universal History is instead of a Map of the World. Special histories, like maps of smaller and smaller territories, may be carried to any degree of detailed minuteness which may be desired.

After taking a general survey of history, in proceeding to select a specific course for more particular and thorough investigation, we are guided, as in geography, by considering what has a more intimate connection with our own country and with ourselves;—and this is in accordance with the first problem proposed. The stream of history may be traced from ourselves up to our origin, or, which is the more natural course, from our origin down to ourselves. This stream may be compared to the Amazon with its multitudinous branches;—only its course must be regarded as reversed. We are at the source of some one of those minute subdivisions; and the business is, through streamlet, brook, branch, river and flood, to find our way to the ocean; or rather, conversely, we are to begin at the ocean, which represents our historical origin, and trace our way back through the particular river, branch, brook, and streamlet to the little spring from which we set out before. And in this last case, it is manifest we must continually *select* as we pass on, neglecting all other branches and divisions except that which connects our course with the desired end.

In thus tracing the progress of history from the origin of man to ourselves, the following course of study, or rather of reading, may be recommended: Where alternate books are suggested, the latter are for a shorter course, should an abbreviation be supposed necessary.

1. Some Compend of General History: as Weber's Outlines.
2. A review of the Biblical Histories, with the Apocrypha and Josephus.
3. Rollin's Ancient History; or Schmitz.
4. Grecian History; Grote's, or Thirlwall's, or Felton and Smith's.
5. Roman History; Goldsmith's Rome, for the popular story; Arnold's Rome, for the critical results; Merivale's Romans under the Empire; and Gibbon's Decline and Fall.
6. Mediæval History; Hallam's Middle Ages, Guizot's European Civilization, and Russell's Modern Europe.
7. English History; Hume, with some continuation, say Macaulay's.
8. American History; Robertson's America, and Bancroft's History of the United States.

Add, if you please, some history of your own State, and of your native town or city; and you will have a course extending from some 30 to 70 or 80 volumes. This looks very formidable, but is, after all, a small matter compared with the number of volumes of novels which some young persons find time to devour.

Other special histories, as those of the Saracens or Turks; of China or India; of France, Italy, Germany; Robertson's Charles V.; Allison's Europe; Prescott's Ferdinand and Isabella, and Philip II., his Conquest of Mexico, Peru, &c., may be added as one's leisure or personal interest, or their literary merit, may dictate.

Of course, history should always be read with constant reference to maps and chronology, which have been not inaptly termed, its two eyes. Special historical maps are of very great service.

In tracing the course of history down to ourselves, it must be remembered that we are not drawing a genealogical tree. It is not the origin of our bodies but of our minds that concerns us. We are what we are, not by the mere course of natural generation, but by virtue of a system of influences which has been gathering its character and its elements in many and divers directions during the progress of past ages.

Christianity, Judaism, with its Archaic origins, Grecian and Roman civilization, have had vastly more to do with making us what we are than our barbaric ancestors. Such are the influences which have determined our being so unlike the Hindoos and Persians, or the Chinese and Japanese.

The connection between Sacred and Profane history, and that between Ancient and Modern history, are among the most important and interesting, yet much neglected portions of historical reading. For this reason, Josephus, Gibbon, Hallam and Guizot deserve especial attention. The best specimen which we possess of a history, constructed as a history should be, is that which Gibbon has given us,—bating its one great defect arising from his unreasonable prejudice against Christianity.

As we approach the present time, both greater particularity and wider extent of view are important. Some better means than newspapers were desirable for keeping up a knowledge of contemporaneous history; for example, some Annual Review of the World.

If now we were to proceed to arrange a course of historical reading, with reference to the second and third problems proposed above, it would be found to pass through nearly the same channels as those already traced in accordance with the first problem. The progress of man as a race intellectually and spiritually, corresponds for the most part with the history of our own development; and this shows *our* peculiarly favored position among mankind.

The third problem, viz., man's advancement towards the accomplishment of his highest, his spiritual destinies, presents at once the most philosophical and the most interesting point of view in which history can be considered. In this point of view, history assumes its peculiar and unapproachable dignity. It is the great, divine epic of man's fall and recovery. God manifest in the flesh is the central figure. The Kingdom of Christ on earth is the development. The triumph over sin and evil is the conclusion.

◆

FISHING FOR OFFERS.

A good deal of this sort of angling is done in fashionable society, and it may be justly characterized as a heartless, unladylike sport. Some women pride themselves on the number of offers they have rejected, recalling them with as much complacency as the "noble savage" exhibits when counting the notches in the handle of his tomahawk, each of which indicates the taking of a scalp. When one of these heart-slayers meets her fate from Cupid's cross-bow, and is left to pine uncared for by the object of her worship, it is impossible to pity her. The event is in accord with poetic justice, and the victims of her vanity and caprice are most righteously avenged. It is not difficult for a fascinating woman to lure a man into a declaration of love. She has a thousand little arts at her command, which she can practice unseen by the general eye, upon a suitor; and then insist, quite plausibly, that she has "given him no encouragement." It is ineffably mortifying to a sensitive man to be treated in this way; and no generous woman is ever guilty of such a dishonorable piece of strategy. The rejected have, therefore, this consolation,—they know, or ought to know, that their fair beguilers do not possess the qualities which are most desirable in a wife. This reflection should be a sufficient salve for their wounded pride.

More than a century ago, an anonymous writer, who had probably been entrapped into making an offer by some soulless coquette, proposed that love-making should be governed by fixed laws, to be recognized and subscribed to by both sexes. Among the points which he wished to have determined as a basis for a "Code of Courtship" were these:

"How great the contraction of the fingers must be before it amounts to a squeeze of the hand.

"What can be properly termed an absolute denial from a maid, and what from a widow.

"What advances a lover may presume to make after having received a pat upon the shoulder from his mistress's fan.

"What construction a man may put upon a smile, and in what cases a frown goes for nothing."

These questions are as pertinent (perhaps the ladies will say as *impertinent*) now as they were a hundred years ago, and there are many more, equally to the purpose, which will suggest themselves to the reader in this connexion. For the benefit and guidance of susceptible gentlemen who are fished for with no other object than to be cast contemptuously aside as soon as caught, the *Ledger* would like to see them answered by competent authority.

By all means let us have a set of rules, whereby a man may know when it is safe for him to open his mind, without danger of being snubbed, or condemned to utter despair, by the object of his passion. Why not have a congress of maids, wives and widows, to legislate on this delicate subject, with the understanding that their decisions shall be binding?

◆

THE GHOST IN ARMOR.

A LEGEND OF ST MICHAEL'S EVE.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

Part I.

Sir Walter De Guyon is surly and sad,
There's trouble a-brewing, I think;
The Steward is certain Sir Walter is mad,
And the Butler declares, "He is took very bad—
This morning he doubled his drink!"

And why is he ranting and raving, I pray?
And calling his daughter such names?
He stands by the Green in the sturdiest way;
And *Alice* has mounted the Orange to-day,
And laughed at the run-away James!

And then Sir Walter has heard beside,
From one of his vigilant spies,
How *Alice* his daughter, his darling and pride,
With young De Ruyter, last evening, was spied—
You may guess at the Knight's surprise!

Beneath the casement the maiden was seen,
With this gay gallant at her feet;
Holding her hand his arm between,
And calling her "love," and "life" and "queen,"
With kisses many and sweet!

De Ruyter!—a captain of William's band
And counted a worthy scion
Of an ancient house in the Dutchman's land—
But what is he to offer his hand
To one of the race, De Guyon?

De Ruyter!—"a squire of low degree,"
And an anti-Jacobite war-man;
And what is he, whoever he be,
To match his *de* with the mighty *De*
That was known before "the *Norman*?"

"The saucy varlet!" Sir Walter said;
"The fellow deserves to swing;
Before my castle to show his head!
I'll serve the dog as I'd like instead
To serve his villainous king!"

In vain the maiden bemoans his fate;
Already the fierce Sir Walter
Has set his guards at every gate!
He is fain to fly; but all too late;
He is doomed to feel the halter.

There's a dismal cell—a dungeon in sooth,
Hard by the banquetting-room,
(Sir Walter De Guyon has little ruth!)
And there, alas! the venturous youth,
De Ruyter, is waiting his doom!

Sir Walter De Guyon is rather elate
At the capital job he has done;
So he summons his friends—the small and the great—
To come and assist at an elegant *fete*,
Devoted to feasting and fun!

Part II.

They are eating and drinking with glee.
The guests at this notable feast;
Lords, nobles of every degree,
All merry as merry can be,
With fifty retainers at least.

In the midst of the revelry rose
Sir Walter De Guyon to say:
"You all are aware, I suppose,
'Tis St. Michael's evening"—but shows
Some symptoms of fainting away!

A bottle of Burgundy stood
By chance in the orator's reach,
Which drinking as well as he could,
And swearing the tipple was good—
Sir Walter went on with his speech.

"'Twas this very night as, you know,
My ancestor, once on a time,
As sundry old chronicles show,
('Twas ages and ages ago)
Committed a horrible crime.

"A black-armored knight, it is told,
Who slept in a neighboring room,
Was murdered ('twas thought for his gold)—
The room which now happens to hold
The Dutchman awaiting his doom.

"My ancestor noised it about,
The minions of Justice to blind,
That the stranger arose and went out;
But he never could settle the doubt
Why the man left his armor behind.

"Belike, you have heard it before,—
The credulous peasants believe
His ghost in the armor he wore,
Comes stalking abroad, as of yore,
On every St. Michael his Eve."

"What think you?" he laughingly said,
"Perhaps we may see him to-night—
As often in books we have read——"
Ah! sees he the ghost of the dead?
Why blanches Sir Walter with fright?

What meaneth that terrible din,
Like the sound of a bursting door?
See!—black as the angel of sin—
The Ghost in the Armor comes in,
And marches across the floor!

Aghast at the horrible sight,
Down—down they tumble; and lay
Silent with terror and fright
Through all that terrible night,
Quite into the following day!

Now where is De Ruyter, I pray?
And Alice? (she's vanished from sight!)
There's a letter from London to say
The lovers had ridden away
On a saddle and pillion that night.

His manner of leaving, of course,
His own reprobation had earned;
He owned he was full of remorse
Concerning the armor and horse,
But both should be quickly returned.

And with her good father's consent,
That is, should he kindly invite her,
It was Alice's settled intent
To make him a visit in Lent,
Along with her own De Ruyter!

◆

—In this number of the *Ledger*, we publish the fourth of the series of articles entitled Advice to Young Men, by the Presidents of twelve of the Principal Colleges in the United States. It will be remembered that the first of the series was "On the Study of the Mathematics," by President Hill, of Harvard College; the second, "On the Study of the Classics," by President Woolsey, of Yale College; and the third, on "Hints to a Youth about to enter College," by President Maclean, of the College of New Jersey. The article this week, it will be seen, is on "Hints upon Historical Reading," by President Goodwin, of the University of Pennsylvania. In our next issue we shall publish the fifth of the series, which is on "Rhetorical Culture," by Rev. Asa D. Smith, D.D., President of Dartmouth College. The sixth article will be by President Stearns, of Amherst College, on "Self-Mastery as an Element of Greatness and Success."

◆

—As the *Ledger* is electrotyped, we are always prepared to print and furnish back numbers. Persons who desire to obtain complete sets of the papers containing Mr. Beecher's story, as far as published, can be supplied by applying at this office, or at any news-office or book-store where papers are sold. If a dealer does not happen to have them on hand, he will procure them for any one, on their being applied for.

JOHN A. SUTTER,

AND

THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD IN CALIFORNIA.

BY JAMES PARTON.

People often say what they would do if they should find a gold mine; evidently supposing that a man who finds a gold mine is made rich of course. But this, it appears, is not always the case. Neither the man who discovered gold in California, nor the man upon whose land it was discovered, have been benefitted by it. On the contrary, the discovery ruined them both, and both are to-day poor men.

John A. Sutter, the son of Swiss parents, was born in 1803, at Baden, where he was reared and expensively educated. In early life, he obtained a commission in the French Army, in which he rose to the rank of captain, and remained in the service until he was thirty years of age. A number of his Swiss friends and relations in 1833 formed a company with a view to emigration to some part of the United States suited to wine growing; and they selected Captain Sutter to go to America and choose a location for the colony. He arrived in New York, upon this errand, in July, 1834.

Proceeding to the State of Missouri, he chose a place for the colony in a region unpopulated, if indeed it had been explored, and he was making preparations for the coming of his friends, when a sad mishap frustrated the enterprise. Captain Sutter brought with him a considerable capital, with which he was to begin a settlement, erect buildings, and get a piece of land under cultivation. Unfortunately, a steamboat loaded with implements and stores, timber and other materials for the projected establishment, was sunk in the Mississippi river, and proved a total loss. Being thus compelled to postpone the scheme of colonization, and being of an adventurous turn of mind, he made a tour in New Mexico. There he met some hunters and trappers who had visited Upper California, and they gave him such a captivating description of that beautiful and romantic country, that he determined to go thither himself.

In March, 1838, he joined a party of the American Fur Company, and travelled with them to the Rocky Mountains; and thence, with six mounted men, he crossed the range, and made his way to Fort Vancouver, in Oregon. As there was no mode of getting down the coast to California, he took passage in a vessel bound to the Sandwich Islands. At Honolulu, he waited five months, during which not a single vessel sailed for San Francisco. He then accepted a situation as supercargo in a vessel which was to land stores at Sitka, an island which forms part of what was till recently Russian America, but which, I presume, will soon rejoice in another name. From Sitka the vessel proceeded along the coast, and was driven into the port of San Francisco in distress.

Captain Sutter announced his intention to remain in the country to the Mexican Governor, from whom he obtained a grant of land. After many adventures and tantalizing delays, he landed a schooner load of effects on the Sacramento river, near the site of the present city of Sacramento, and there began to build the stockade afterwards so famous as Sutter's Fort. He was then thirty-six years of age, and had been in America five years. His colony consisted of six white men, adventurers from various parts of the world, and eight Indians. In the following year eight more white men straggled in and joined him, so that the population of the district consisted of fourteen white men, eight friendly Indians, and some hundreds of roving savages. Every season, however, brought in a few recruits.

The colony prospered. Besides cultivating the soil, Captain Sutter and his comrades sent hides to San Francisco for exportation to the United States, and the port became a depôt of furs purchased from the wandering trappers and hunters. The land granted to Captain Sutter consisted of eleven square leagues, and he named his settlement New Helvetia.

Many a worn and starving band of emigrants from the United States were relieved and entertained at Captain Sutter's. One example of this hospitality tells a terrible story of the sufferings endured at that day in crossing the plains. A man came in one morning and reported that his comrades were some miles distant in the desert country, dying of starvation. Sutter instantly loaded a few of his best mules with provisions, and dispatched them to the relief of the perishing band, under the guidance of two Indians. The starving party was so large that the supplies were insufficient. After consuming the provisions, they killed the mules and ate them; then, they killed the two Indians and devoured them, and even after that, when some of their own number fell exhausted, they ate them. This is almost too much for belief. I relate it upon the authority of Mr. Edward E. Dunbar, President of the Travellers' Club of this city, who had the story from Captain Sutter himself, and who has recently published a work upon the discovery of gold in California, from which most of these particulars are derived.

The war with Mexico ended in our acquisition of California. As early as March, 1847, the flag of the United States floated over San Francisco, and troops of the United States garrisoned the town.

In 1848, Captain Sutter was the owner of eleven leagues of land, upon which he had erected various costly improvements. He had a flour-mill supplied by a mill-race three miles long, which had cost twenty-five thousand dollars. He had expended ten thousand dollars in the erection of a saw-mill. One thousand acres of his land were verdant with young wheat. He owned eight thousand cattle, two thousand horses and mules, two thousand sheep, and one thousand hogs. Besides possessing all this property, he had been appointed Alcalde of the district by Commodore Stockton, and Indian agent by General Kearney. He was monarch of all he surveyed, and was held in high respect both by his colonists and by the United States officers stationed in the Territory. This was his position on the day gold was discovered on his land.

One of the men in his employment was James W. Marshall, a native of New Jersey, who, after long wanderings on the Pacific coast, had enlisted under Colonel Fremont, in the California battalion, from which, at the close of the war, he was honorably discharged. As he was an excellent mechanic, he obtained employment from Captain Sutter. It was he who superintended the building of the saw-mill just mentioned, which was situated at a point forty miles east of Sutter's fort. In January, 1848, the mill being nearly complete, they had begun to saw timber, Marshall still being the superintendent.

In the evening of February 2, 1848, James Marshall suddenly rode into the fort,—his horse foaming, and both horse and rider spattered all over with mud. The man was laboring under wild excitement. Meeting Captain Sutter, he asked to be conducted to a room where they could converse alone. The astonished Sutter complied with his desire, and they entered a secluded apartment. Marshall closed the door, and asked Captain Sutter if he was certain they were safe from intrusion, and begged him to lock the door. The honest Sutter began to think the man was mad, and was a little alarmed at the idea of being locked in with a maniac. He assured Marshall that they were safe from interruption. Satisfied, at length, upon this point, he took from his pocket a pouch, from which he poured upon the table half a thimble-full of yellow grains of metal, with the exclamation that he thought they were gold.

"Where did you get it?" asked Captain Sutter.

Marshall replied, that, early that morning, the water being shut off from the mill-race, as usual, he noticed, in passing along, shining particles scattered about on the bottom. He picked up several, and, finding them to be metal, the thought had burst upon his mind that they might be gold. Having gathered about an ounce of them, he had mounted his horse and ridden forty miles to impart the momentous secret to his employer, and bring the yellow substance to some scientific test.

Captain Sutter was at first disposed to laugh at his excited friend. Among his stores, however, he happened to have a bottle of aqua-fortis, and the action of this powerful acid upon the yellow particles at once proved them to be pure gold!

The excitement of this moment can be imagined. Marshall proposed that Captain Sutter should immediately mount and ride back with him to the saw-mill; but, as it was raining hard, the night dark, and the mill forty miles distant, Captain Sutter preferred to wait till daylight. Marshall, however, could not be restrained. He set out immediately on his return. At the dawn of day, Sutter started; and, when he was within ten miles of the saw-mill, he saw before him, coming out of some bushes, a dark object which he took to be a grizzly bear, but which proved to be James Marshall!

"What are you doing here?" asked Sutter.

Marshall replied that he had been to the saw-mill, but was so impatient to see the captain, that he had walked back ten miles to meet him. They went on together to the mill, and found all the laborers picking up the shining particles from the bottom of the race. Captain Sutter did not relish the prospect. He soon satisfied himself that gold, in considerable quantities, existed in the neighborhood, but as the harvest was coming on, and some of his improvements were unfinished, he feared lest his men should leave him in the lurch, and all go to gold-digging. Calling his men around him, he explained his situation, and they agreed to keep the matter a secret for six weeks, when the harvest would be gathered. But such a secret cannot be kept. A teamster, going from the mill to the fort, and wishing something to drink, went to a store and asked for a bottle of whisky. As the teamster's credit was not high in the country, the store-keeper intimated that whisky was a cash article. The man said he had plenty of money, and immediately showed some grains of the precious metal which he had brought from the saw-mill. The store-keeper, having satisfied himself that the yellow particles were indeed gold, supplied the whisky, at the same time begging the man to tell where he had got it. The teamster, at first, refused to reveal the secret, but the whisky soon unloosed his tongue and he related the whole story.

The rush that followed is well known. All California hurried to the spot. Sutter's harvest was never gathered. His oxen, hogs and sheep were stolen by hungry men and devoured. No hands could be procured to run the mills. His lands were squatted upon and dug over, and he wasted his remaining substance in fruitless litigation to recover it. To carry on the legal warfare he was compelled to sacrifice or mortgage the parts of his estate not seized by the gold-diggers; until, little by little, his magnificent property melted away, and he is now, at the age of sixty-four, all but destitute. For one item, he has paid, during the last ten years, in counsel fees and legal expenses, one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars.

As for poor Marshall, (who claims to be a great grand-son of a signer of the Declaration of Independence,) he was one of the unsuccessful diggers. He was reduced to extreme poverty. Two or three years ago, however, he obtained a warrant for a tract of land in California, to which his services in the Mexican war entitled him, and upon which he began the culture of grapes. In this business he has had some success, and his prospects are fair for a secure and honorable old age. His little farm is situated not far from the spot where, nineteen years ago, he ruined himself by discovering a gold mine.

I cannot help thinking that either California, or the United States, or the courts, or the public, should make some compensation to the worthy Captain Sutter, who was impoverished, without any fault of his own, by an event which has so materially benefitted us all.

◆

OUR SNOBS.

We have feather-bed knights and popinjay patricians among us, who send the measure of their delicate digits to Paris in order to have kid gloves that will fit without a wrinkle, and who, if they ever ate anything as vulgar as gingerbread, would insist on having it gilt. Some of our paladins of the Most Noble Order of the Silver Spoon were born with that article in their mouths, others have had it thrust between their teeth accidentally. Of the two classes, the latter are often the most intolerable; but from contact with either, may every saint of gentlemanly instincts protect all *true gentlemen*.

Of these last, thank the gods! there are more than enough in every walk of life in this country to counterbalance the fuss-and-feather "gents." We meet scores of them in Broadway every day, and they may be found trapping beaver on the outer edge of civilization. Many of them can't dance and are equally "slow" at slang and small talk. They don't wear "nobby" hats, nor lavender kids, nor fancy coats, nor constellate their shirt-fronts with diamonds, nor proclaim themselves the helots of Foppery by wearing huge gold chains; but on their fronts is written *man*, and their calm and self-possessed bearing distinguishes them in society from the tailor's pattern-cards and jeweller's show-cases, to whom only their fellow-fools and fops accord the title *gentle*.

◆

[From the New London Daily Star.]

Mr. Beecher's Story.—The second installment of Henry Ward Beecher's story appears in the *Ledger* for May 25th. The interest aroused by the opening chapters is more than sustained. As the story progresses we predict that it will give additional evidence of the genius of Mr. Beecher in his new *role*, and by universal consent be acknowledged one of the most powerful and brilliant works of fiction ever penned by an American author. There are many beautiful passages in the second installment of the story. What can be more beautiful than this concerning the trailing arbutus?

* * * * * *

The story, thus far, abounds in magnificent word-paintings like this, and is not only remarkable for its fine imagery, but for its able delineation of New England character and characteristics. It promises to be what it assumes to be—a tale of New-England Life, not overdrawn or exaggerated, but so true to nature as to seem rather to deal with realities than with things which exist only in the imagination of the closely observant writer. We have noticed that a very few of our exchanges have advised Mr. Beecher to stick to his pulpit, but the millions who read his novel will rejoice that such advice is disregarded. And this novel may prove the most effective sermon that Henry Ward Beecher ever preached.

◆

[From the Commercial Advertiser.]

Mr. Beecher's story improves as it advances. He is beginning to "mix his work with his brains," as the old painter's story phrases it. Here is a picture that might have been painted by the pen of Dickens. * * * We are so glad of the opportunity of welcoming some of Mr. Beecher's best things, that we have forgotten the limit of space, and must close quotation, although strongly tempted to make further extract.

THE BRIDGE.

BY N. G. SHEPHERD.

Spanning the river from side to side,
Where the blackened waters, murmuring, glide
'Twixt narrow houses, sombre and brown,
In the very heart of the busy town,
Is the old stone bridge, with its solid piers,
And its buttresses that have stood for years.

Under its arches the cool waves flow ;
And over the bridge the people go ;—
The waves they murmur a ceaseless song ;
And the people talk as they pass along
Of their joys and sorrows, their hopes and fears,
And the trust they place in the future years.

Sometimes I stand on the bridge by day,
When the golden-netted sunbeams play ;
And sometimes at night when the stars look down
On the spires and roofs of the silent town ;
And the lights on the old bridge gleam and glow
In the blackened waves of the stream below.

By day my thoughts take the golden hue
Of the sun that shines in the sky's deep blue ;
And backward borne, as on some swift tide,
Through Memory's shadowy gates they glide,
Like ships that sail to a distant shore
That their wave-worn keels have touched before.

The people come, and the people go ;
And under the arches the cool waves flow ;
While the sharpened wherries glide along,
And the boatmen's voices, raised in song,
Like echoes out of the dim Past seem,
That call to me in a kind of a dream.

But at night when the lights on the old bridge glow
In the blackened waves of the stream below ;
And over the spires and roofs of the town
The glittering stars from the sky look down,
Then my thoughts go out with the cool ebb tide
To the ocean that flows so deep and wide.

The voice of its waves I can hear afar
As they tumble in surf on the harbor bar ;
And I think of the souls that have sunk to sleep
In its voiceless chambers so still and deep ;
Of the ships that sail on its billowy breast ;
And the storms that waken it out of rest.

And my thoughts come back to the bridge by day,
When the golden-netted sunbeams play ;
To the passing crowds that over it go,
Shifting currents of life that flow
To another ocean, vaster far
Than that which moans on the harbor bar.

WINNING HER WAY.

By MRS. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "BRITOMARTE, THE MAN-HATER," "SELF-MADE," "THE HIDDEN HAND," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER LVI.

THE END OF PROBATION.

> From that day forth, in peace and joyous bliss,
> They lived together long, without debate;
> No private jars, nor spite of enemies,
> Could shake the safe assurance of their state.
> SPENSER.

Besides the natural geniality and sociability of his disposition, which always moved General Lyon to bring his friends and relations about him, there were other and even stronger motives that urged him to invite Richard Hammond to remain at Old Lyon Hall. The old gentleman wanted to save "the unlucky dog from his friends," and also he wanted to study him.

And as weeks and months of close companionship in the seclusion of the country house passed away, he *did* study him. And apparently the study was satisfactory.

All poor Dick's impulses were altogether good. Indeed, it was through the very goodness of his nature that he so often came to grief.

Dick could not bear to say No ; and not only ever to his friends, but not even to his enemies, for his salvation. Dick could not endure to inflict pain, not only ever upon good people but not even upon sinners. [illegible] amiable traits in his character were used by evil-disposed people to his injury.

There was indeed so much of the woman in Dick's gentle and lively nature that very few women could have loved him as Anna did. But then there was enough of the man in Anna's nature to produce an equilibrium of the sexes in their union.

General Lyon noticed all this, and he noticed something else—namely, that though Dick and Anna certainly loved each other devotedly, they bore their probation with exemplary patience.

This touched the heart of the veteran, but still he would not shorten the time.

Moreover, he felt the infirmities of age creeping upon him, he knew that at his years life was extremely precarious, and he certainly wanted to see another generation of Lyons in lineal descent from himself before he should go home and be no more on earth.

Yet for all this he would not hasten the marriage of Dick and Anna.

Drusilla, with her quick perceptions and warm sympathies, read the hearts of all around, and wished to make them happy.

Like an artful little angel as she was, she chose her opportunity well.

It was a lovely day in the latter part of April, and General Lyon and herself were sitting alone together in a front parlor where windows opened upon a conservatory in full bloom.

Dick and Anna were gone on a visit of inspection of the works at Hammond House.

The General had little Leonard in his arms.

Drusilla was sewing beside them.

"Ah, my dear, you do not know how much this little fellow adds to my happiness!" he said.

"I am always so glad and grateful to hear you say that, dear uncle, and I hope little Leonard as he grows in intelligence will be more and more of a comfort to you," she replied ; and then, after a little pause, she said :

"But if little Leonard, who is only my son, gives you so much content, how much joy Anna's children will give you."

"I don't know, my dear ; and, besides, I may not live to see them."

"Dear uncle, you will live many years yet."

"I cannot hope to do that, my dear ; I am past seventy. I have already lived out the three-score and ten years allotted as the natural term of a man's life."

"But, dear uncle, I think all nature teaches us that a CENTURY is the natural term of a man's life."

"A pleasant theory, my child. I wish it were a true one."

"But I think it is a true one."

"Why do you think so?"

"From analogy. All natural philosophers and historians who have made the nature and habits of the animal creation their study, have agreed upon this fact : that all healthy animals, unless their lives are terminated by violence, live five times as long as it takes them to grow up. Now it takes the human animal twenty years at least to grow to maturity ; therefore the human animal really should live five times twenty years, which makes a round hundred, or a CENTURY ; and I firmly believe it is intended for him to live that long, if he only acted in accordance with the laws of life and health. And, dear uncle, you seem always to have acted so, and therefore I think that you may safely calculate upon living out your century and then dying the gentle death of mere old age."

"There is a certain reasonableness in your theory, my little philosopher."

"And there is a roundness and completeness in this full century of life which is *so* satisfactory," said Drusilla, heartily.

"Yes, my dear, especially to those who love this planet Earth, with all her failings, as I confess I do," smiled the old gentleman. "And besides, I would like to live to see Anna and Dick happily married, with a thriving family of boys and girls about their knees."

"Then, dear uncle, why not let them marry at once?" pleaded Drusilla.

"'Marry at once!' Drusilla, you astound me, child!" exclaimed the old gentleman, in unaffected astonishment.

"Yes, marry at once, dear uncle, and then, if you live to be as old as Methusaleh, you will still have only the longer time to witness their happiness," persisted Drusilla, who, now that she had "broken the ice," was determined to go through.

"But, my dear, I put Richard Hammond upon a probation of twelve months, and the time has not expired yet."

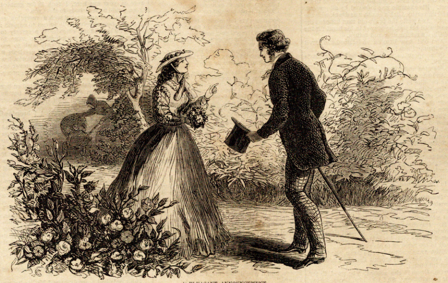
"It is very nearly half gone, though. Five months of the allotted term has passed away. There are seven months of penance remaining. Dear uncle, be kind to them and commute that to one month. Let them marry in May."

"Have they commissioned you to plead their cause, my dear?" gravely inquired General Lyon.

"Oh no, sir, they have not. And perhaps also you may think me very presumptuous and impertinent to meddle in the matter. If you do, I will beg your pardon and be silent."

"Nonsense, my dear child! I think nothing of the sort. Speak all your thoughts freely to me. They are good and true thoughts, I know, though they may not be very worldly wise. Come now, why should I shorten the probation of Dick?"

"Oh, because he has behaved so well. Indeed, dear uncle, if you really mean that Dick should marry Anna, I think that you had just as well let him marry her now as half a year hence. I believe Dick is as good now as he will ever be, or as any young man can be. Why do you insist on a probation? If Dick were playing a part in this good behavior, he could play it six months longer as well as he has played it six months past, for so great a stake as Anna's hand. But he is not playing a part. You know as well as I do that Dick is as frank, sincere and open-hearted as his best friend or worst enemy could desire him to be. He is not playing a part. His present steadiness is but an earnest of what his whole future life will be, with Anna by his side. Dear uncle, I really do think that all Dick's irregularities grew out of his banishment from Anna's society. He sought gay companions—or rather *no;* we are sure that he *never* sought them ; but he allowed himself to fall into their company to find oblivion for his regrets. With the mere promise of Anna's hand, you see he has dropped his disreputable friends altogether. With Anna for his wife, he will never be in danger of taking them up again."



A PLEASANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

"There is much reason in what you say, my dear," admitted General Lyon.

"And, besides," said Drusilla, dropping reason and resorting to sentiment, "it is such a *pity* not to make them happy when you have the power to do it."

"I will think of what you have advanced, my dear Drusilla," said the veteran, gravely. "But Lord bless my soul alive!" he added, elevating his eyebrows, "now I do think of it, the young man himself has not petitioned for a curtailment of his probation!"

"*Oh, uncle, has he not?* No, not in set terms, perhaps, because you absolutely forbade him to resume the subject until the specified year should have terminated ; and of course he felt, and still feels, bound to obey you. But has not his whole conduct for the last five months been a plea for the commutation of his sentence? Has not every word, look and act of his life here been a declaration of devotion to Anna, a prayer for mercy from you, and a promise of fidelity to both?"

"I cannot deny that."

"Then, dear uncle, let them marry at once. Oh, forgive my plain speech! for you know you told me to speak my thoughts freely."

"Certainly."

"Then let them marry at once."

"Is there no other reason you would like to urge why they should be made happy as you express it, just now?"

"Oh, yes, dear sir ; if you make them wait until the time of probation is out, it will bring the wedding to the middle of November—sad November, which is always gloomy enough in itself and is now doubly gloomy to us from its associations. Three times Anna's marriage has been appointed to take place in November, and three times it has been defeated—twice by death and once—but we will say no more of that. Let us change the month and even the season, dear sir. Let the marriage come off in May—this next May. It is now beautiful spring—the best season in the year for a wedding and a wedding tour. Let them marry and go ; and you and I, and little Leonard will stay here and have a good time this summer. In autumn they will return and join us again. And early in the winter we will all go up to Washington and live at Cedarwood during the season. Dear Uncle, I do think you had better let them get their wedding tour over this summer. You will miss Anna very much less in summer than in winter."

"That is very true," said the General, reflectively.

"And you will let them marry in May?" eagerly inquired Drusilla.

"Ah! I don't know. I cannot move in the matter unless the young gentleman does. I cannot fling my grand-daughter at Mr. Dick Hammond's head!"

"Oh, uncle! how can you say such things? You know poor Dick is tongue-tied on that subject for the present, by your prohibition, as well as by his sense of honor. He *cannot* speak of this without your leave. But only give him leave by a glance, a nod, a hint, and he will be on his knees to you to grant his suit and shorten his probation," said Drusilla.

"Hem! Suppose you give the glance, nod, or hint, that may be required for the encouragement of this despairing lover?" proposed the General, archly.

"That I will, with all my heart and soul," replied Drusilla, warmly.

The next day at noon, while Drusilla was walking beside her baby's carriage out on the lawn, Dick, with his fishing rod over his back, sauntered up to her.

Drusilla dropped behind so as to let the carriage and the nurse get far enough ahead to be out of hearing, and then she said :

"Dick, I think if you will ask our uncle to release you from your promise of silence on a certain subject, that he will do so."

"Drusilla, do you really think he will? If I thought so, if I was sure he would not banish me at once from Anna's side, I would ask him this moment!" exclaimed Dick, his eyes dancing with eagerness.

"He will not banish you. Why should he? You will *break* no promise to him ; you will only ask him if he sees fit to *release* you from your promise of silence on a certain subject. I think he will give you leave to speak on that subject. And, furthermore, when you *do* speak, I think he will listen to you favorably."

"Oh, Drusilla! do you? Do you think so, indeed? If I thought so, I should be the luckiest dog and the happiest man in existence."

"Go try for yourself at once, Dick. He is in his study. He has just got through his morning papers, and is enjoying his pipe. The opportunity is highly auspicious. Go at once, Dick. You will never find him in a more favorable mood."

"I'm off this instant. Heaven bless you, Drusilla, and make you as happy as I hope to be," exclaimed Richard Hammond, dropping his fishing tackle, and dashing away to put his destiny to the test.

Drusilla hastened after her baby's carriage, overtook it, and continued to walk beside it, and guard it for more than an hour longer.

She had just turned with it towards the house when she was met by Dick, who was hastening to greet her.

"Oh, Drusa, Drusa, dear Drusa, it is all right now! And all through you! And I came to tell you so, and to thank you, even before I go to tell Anna!" exclaimed Dick, with his face all beaming with happiness.

And he seized and kissed Drusilla's hand, and then darted off again, in search of Anna.

And thus through Drusilla's intervention, was Richard Hammond's probation commuted, and the marriage of the lovers appointed to be celebrated about the middle of May.

Meanwhile Drusilla had written to "mammy," offering to her the situation of house-keeper, and to her husband that of head gardener at Cedarwood. She had directed her letter to the care of the Reverend Mr. Hopper, at Alexandria, feeling sure that it would by this means safely reach the hands of the nurse.

In due time Drusilla received an answer, badly written and worse spelt, yet sufficiently expressive of "mammy's" sentiments on the subject.

She thanked Mrs. Lyon from the bottom of her heart, and would gladly take the place and try to do her duty by the mistress. And likewise her old man. She never expected to have such a piece of good fortune come to her and her old man in the old ages of their lives. Which it had just come in good time too, seeing as her last darter was agoing to marry and leave her and her old man alone. And besides, she herself was aged before her time, all along of spending all the days of her life in close, sick rooms. And she was mortially glad to leave the perfession of sick nussin' to younger and stronger wimmin. Which she was fairly pining for the country, where her childhood and youth had been passed. She had never been able to get reeconciled to the town, although she had lived into it for thirty-five years, and she loved to feed chickens and take care of cows, and make butter and cheese. And as for her old man, it was the delight of his life to hoe and rake, and plant and sow, and weed and trim gardens and vineyards, and sich like. And she was snre they would both be happier than they had ever been in all their lives before. And she prayed Heaven to bless the young madam who had taken such kind thoughts of them in their age, to insure them so much prosperity and pleasure.

CHAPTER LVII.

A MAY-DAY MARRIAGE.

> Be not amazed at life. 'Tis still
> The mode of God with His elect:
> Their hopes exactly to fulfil,
> In times and ways they least expect.
>
> Who marry as they choose, and choose
> Not as they ought, they mock the priest
> And leaving out obedience, lose
> The finest flavor of the feast.
> ALFORD.

The wedding-day of Dick and Anna was fixed for the fifteenth of May.

Then came consultations about the details of the festival.

Should it *be* a festival?

Anna thought not. Her marriage had been so often appointed and so often arrested that she said it would be best taste now to get it over as quietly as possible. She and her betrothed, attended only by General Lyon and Drusilla, would go to church and be married in their travelling-dresses, and start immediately on the wedding tour. Such was Anna's plan.

But General Lyon would not hear of such a thing. What! marry off his grand-daughter and heiress to his nephew in such a semi-clandestine manner, as if he were half-ashamed of the proceeding? What, disappoint all the young people in the neighborhood, who had every right to expect a festival on the marriage of Miss Lyon, of Old Lyon Hall? Not while *he* was head of the family! Anna should be married at home. And there should be such a celebration of the nuptials as the lads and lasses around the hall should remember to the latest day of their lives.

Anna urged that in the middle of May the weather would be too warm for a ball.

General Lyon agreed that it would ; but added that the weather would be delightful for a festival in the open air on the beautiful grounds of the manor ; it would be neither too warm nor too cold, but exactly right for dancing on the lawn. The marriage ceremony he said should be performed in the great drawing-room, the wedding breakfast should be laid in the long dining-room ; but the music and dancing should be enjoyed in the open air.

Anna laughingly appealed to Dick and to Drusilla to take her part against this decision of the general.

But Drusilla and Dick declined to interfere and remained conscientiously neutral.

So the will of the General carried the day.

This obstinacy of the old gentleman made it necessary that a great deal of business should be done, and done at once, as the time was so short to the wedding-day. Wedding cards must be printed and circulated. A new trousseau must be prepared. A sumptuous breakfast must be devised. Certain deeds must be executed.

In furtherance of these works, Dick first went up to Richmond to deal with lawyers and engravers.

And soon after his departure General Lyon and Anna went to Washington to negotiate with milliners and pastry cooks.

And Drusilla and her attendants remained in charge of Old Lyon Hall. She had been affectionately invited to accompany Anna and the General, but, though her baby was now nearly six months old, she declined either to leave him at home or to take him on so long and rough a journey. She thought that her boy and herself were both better in the country. The General agreed with her, and so she was left in charge of the premises.

But though she sadly missed her friendly Anna, and fatherly old general, and gay Dick, yet her life when left at Old Lyon Hall was very different from what it had been when she was alone at Cedarwood.

Here in the old hall she was no longer lonesome and dreary. She had a plenty of company and of interesting employment. She had her darling boy and her attentive servants ; and she had visitors from the neighborhood almost every day ; for young Mrs. Alexander Lyon was growing in favor with the whole neighborhood.

Here she was not obliged to live a secret life. She would drive out in her carriage, with her baby and nurse, whenever she pleased. She could ride out on horseback attended by her young groom Leo, wherever she liked. She could return the calls of her country neighbors ; she could accept their invitatians to dinner or to tea, and she could receive and entertain them at home.

Here she enjoyed the largest liberty. General Lyon and Anna had both assured her that she would only make them happier by behaving in all respects as a daughter of the house, and using it as if it were her own. And Drusilla, convinced of their perfect sincerity, took them at their word.

Her sweet heart and social spirit took pleasure in this frequent intercourse with the country ladies and their little children. She liked to have a whole family, mother, children and nurses, to spend a long day with her at home ; and almost as well she liked to take her boy and nurse and go and pass a whole day at the country house of some friend.

It was gratifying to her also, when her nearest neighbors, the Seymours, came over and spent an evening with her. There were but three persons in this family—old Colonel and Mrs. Seymour, and their youngest daughter Annie, or Nanny, as they called her.

Old Colonel Seymour was a passionate lover of music, and it was the one grievance of his life that his daughter Nanny had no voice and no ear, and never could learn to sing or play on the piano. He could never understand it, he said, how a girl born with the usual allowance of senses, with a quick pair of ears, and a nimble tongue, and who could hear as fast and talk much faster than anybody he ever saw, should pretend that she did not know one tune from another! She that was neither deaf, nor dumb, nor an idiot! It was an incomprehensible fact, but it was no less a great personal injury to himself.

But his one great delight was to come over to Old Lyon Hall in the evening, and hear Drusilla sing and play. Now, we know that her greatest gift was music. She sang with a passion and power equalled by no one in private circles, and excelled by but few in professional life. Honest Colonel Seymour had never in all his earthly experience had the privilege of hearing a great public singer. Therefore the performances of Drusilla affected, I might even say, overwhelmed him or transported him, with equal wonder and delight.

And Drusilla exerted herself hour after hour, evening after evening, to please him, and took as much pleasure herself in the intense appreciation of her one single old adorer, as ever a great prima donna did in the applause of a whole world.

And the honest old gentleman's head was fairly turned with admiration and gratitude.

"To think," he said, as he walked home with his wife and daughter, one moonlight night, after spending an evening at Old Lyon Hall, "to think of having such a voice as that in the neighborhood! to think of being able to hear it several times a week, for the asking! Oh! it ought, indeed it ought, to raise the price of real estate in this locality! And it would do it, too, if people really could feel what good music is!"

"Papa," laughed the old wife, "you are an old gander. And if you were not gray and bald, and very good, I should be jealous."

"Oh, but mother, such strains! Oh, my Heaven, such divine strains!" he exclaimed, catching his breath in ecstacy.

"What will you do when your St. Cecilia leaves the neighborhood?" inquired his daughter.

"Leaves the neighborhood! is she going to do that?" gasped the music-maniac.

"They are all going to Washington, next winter, she says."

"Then we'll—go to! I say, mother, *one* season in town, would not be amiss for Nanny ; and so we can take her there next winter ; and then I may swim and soar in celestial sounds every evening!"

"Papa, now you are too provoking, and *I* am jealous," said Nanny. "For my part, I don't like music any more than I do any other sort of racket. And I do think if there is one nuisance worse than another, it is a singing and playing lunatic, filling the whole room full of shrieks and crashes, just as if a thousand housemaids were smashing a million of dishes, and squalling together over the catastrophe!"

"Oh, child, child, what a misfortune for you to have been born deaf, as to your divine ears!" answered the old gentleman in tones of deep and sincere pity and regret.

"I'm sure, papa, I often wish I had been born deaf as to my bodliy ears! I mean, when your divinity is shrieking and thrashing, and raising such a hullabaloo that I can't hear myself speak!" said Nanny.

"Ah! '*that* accounts for the milk in the cocoanut!' You can't hear yourself speak, and you prefer the sound of your own sweet voice to the music of the spheres!"

"If the music of the spheres is *that* sort of noise, I certainly do, papa."

"Thank Goodness, here we are at our own gate! And now we will drop the subject of music for the rest of the evening—Kitty, was the missing turkey-gobbler found?" inquired Mrs. Seymour of the girl who came to open the door."

"Yes'm."

"And did the maids finish their task of carding?"

"Yes'm."

"And did you keep the fire up in my room?"

"Yes'm."

"That is right. The evenings are real chilly and damp for the time of year. Come in."

And the careful wife and mother led the way into the house.

Richard Hammond was the first of the absentee's to return to Old Lyon Hall. He came one afternoon, bringing with him a large packet of handsomely engraved wedding cards and a bundle of documents, all of which he placed in Drusilla's charge to be delivered to General Lyon on the General's arrival. Then he took leave of Drusilla, and went over to Hammond House to wait there until the return of his uncle and his betrothed.

Two days afterwards, General Lyon and Anna came home.

Anna was attended by a pair of dressmakers, and enriched with no end of finery.

General Lyon was followed by a French cook and his apprentices.

Richard Hammond came over to meet them, and consult over the latest improvements of the bridal programme.

And now the business of preparation was accelerated.

First, the wedding cards were sent out far and near. And the neighborhood, which was not prepared for the surprise, was electrified.

Next the dressmakers, with every skillful needle-woman among the housemaids to help them, were set to work on the trousseau. Of the many dresses that had been made up for Anna's marriage, the last November, most had never been worn and were now in their newest gloss ; but they were not trimmed in the newest fashion, nor were they all suitable for summer wear ; so those first dresses had to be altered and newly trimmed, and many new dresses suitable for the season had to be made up. This kept all the feminine hands in the house very busy for a week.

Drusilla's skill, and taste, and willingness to help made her an invaluable assistant.

Only a few days before the one set for the wedding was the new trousseau finished and packed up, and the new wedding dress and travelling dress completed and laid out.

And now carpenters and upholsterers were brought down from town, and the house and grounds were fitted up and decorated for the happy occasion.

The French cook and his assistants had the kitchen, the pantry, the cellar, the plate-closet, and the long dining-room to themselves, and were up to their linen caps in business.

"Well, it is a notable blessing that one cannot be bothered with this sort of thing very often, as one is not likely to be married more than half a dozen times in one's life," said Anna, who was, or affected to be, very much bored by all this bustle.

"Oh, I hope to Heaven, Anna, we may neither of us ever be married but once! I trust in the Lord, Anna, that we may live together to keep our golden wedding day half a century hence," answered Dick, very devoutly.

For honest Dick was what the Widow Bedot would have called very much "solemnized" by the impending crisis in his fate.

"Blessed is the bride that the sun shines on." The day of days came at last—the auspicious fifteenth of May—clear, bright, warm, genial, with a light breeze playing a lively tune, to which all the green leaves danced in glee. All the flowers bloomed to decorate the scene—all the birds turned out to sing their congratulations! Never was seen such a rosery on the lawn ; never was heard such a concert in the groves.

The brass band that arrived upon the scene as early as ten o'clock inthe morning, was quite a superfluity. Anna sent out and ordered the men not to play until the birds should be silent. So they sat under the shade of the great oak trees, and had ale served out to them, in which they drank the health of the bridegroom and the bride, while they watched the train of carriages that were constantly coming up, bringing guests to the wedding feast. Such was the scene on the shaded, flowery lawn.

Even more festive was the scene within the house.

All the windows of the great drawing-room were thrown open, letting in all the sunshine and the cool breeze of this bright May day. The walls were hung with festoons of fragrant flowers, and the large table in the centre was loaded with the splendid wedding presents to the bride.

It would take up too much time to tell of all these presents. You will find them fully described in the "*Valley Courier*" of that date. They consisted of the usual sort of offerings for these occasions—"sets" of diamonds, emeralds, rubies, pearls and other gems; "sets" of silver plate; "sets" of fine lace, et cetera.

But we must not omit to mention Drusilla's munificent offering to the bride. It was also a "set," a tea set of pure gold, whose exquisite workmanship was even of more value than its costly material.

The appearance of the long dining-room, with the table laid for the wedding breakfast, should have immortalized the French cook if he had not been immortalized before. Here, also, all the windows were thrown open to the light and air. It would never do, said "Monsieur le Chef," for people to be too warm while eating and drinking. Here, however, were no natural flowers. Their powerful odors, said "Monsieur," affected too much the delicious aromas of the viands. But the walls were decorated with artificial flowers, with paintings and gildings, and with mirrors that multiplied the splendors of the scene a thousandfold, and opened imaginary vistas into unending suits of splendid saloons on every side.

The breakfast table reached nearly the whole length of the long dining-room, and was multiplied by the mirrored walls into innumerable other tables on every hand. It was beautifully decorated and sumptuously loaded; every variety of flesh, fish, and fowl that was in season, dressed in the most delicate manner; every sort of rare and rich fruit and vegetable; wonderful pastries, creams, and ices; crystallized sweetmeats, cordials, wines, liqueurs, black and green teas, and coffee such as only a Frenchman can make, were among the good things displayed to delight the palates of the guests.

On the second floor, the bed-chambers and dressing-rooms wore a gay and festive aspect. There also the windows were thrown open to the light and air, and shaded only by the beautiful green trees and flowering vines without. The beds and dressing-tables were freshly covered with snow-white drapery; and on each toilet-table were laid new ivory-handled brushes and combs, silver flagons of rare perfumery, porcelain pots of pomade; and about each room were every convenience, comfort, and luxury that a guest could possibly require,—all provided by a thoughtful hospitality that was careful and considerate in its minutest details.

Early in the day these light, fragrant, and delightful chambers were filled with bevies of fair girls, who were giving the last effective touches to their own and to each other's gay festal dresses, and whose soft talk and silvery laughter made music all around.

They had need to hurry, too; for the hour fixed for the ceremony was high noon, and they must all be ready and in their places to see it.

The bride's chamber was the scene of the most interesting passages. There sat the bride, surrounded by her bride's-maids, and lovingly attended by Drusilla.

Anna's dress was a rich white honiton lace robe over a white silk skirt, made with a low bodice and short sleeves, both edged with narrow lace. On her neck and arms she wore a necklace and bracelets of diamonds; on her hair the wreath of orange blossoms; over her head and shoulders the deep bridal veil of lace to match her robe; on her delicate hands kid gloves as white as snow and soft as down. Her six bride's-maids were all dressed in white tulle, with wreaths of white moss-rose buds on their hair, and veils of white tulle.

On this auspicious day Drusilla, for the first time, entirely laid aside her mourning. She looked beautiful and blooming, in a dress of rose-colored moire-antique, made with a low bodice and short sleeves, trimmed with point lace. On her neck and arms she wore a necklace and bracelets of pearls; on her young matronly brow a wreath of half-open blush roses; on her bosom a bouquet of the same flowers.

For this day also her little Leonard was dressed in gala robes, and sent out upon the lawn in the arms of his nurse, where he remained for the present, gazing with eyes wide open with astonishment and delight on the wonderful pageantry around him.

The marriage-hour struck at length.

The last loitering guests heard it, and hurried down stairs to the drawing-room which was already crowded.

The bride and her maidens heard it, and began to smooth out the folds of their dresses, or touch the edges of their hair, and steal furtive glances at the mirrors to see that all was right before leaving the chamber and facing the hundreds of eyes in the drawing-room below.

Punctually as the last stroke of twelve sounded, the bridegroom and his attendants came to the door.

The procession was formed in the usual manner, and passed down stairs.

Two gentlemen friends who took upon themselves the office of marshals, opened a way through the crowd for the bridal cortège to enter.

On the rug stood the Rev. Dr. Barbar, in his surplice, just as he had stood some six months before; but all the rest was changed now. That was a dark and stormy November night. This was a bright and beautiful May day.

The bridal party, with due decorum, took their places before the officiating minister. There was no let or hindrance now. The face of the blooming bride was as clearly seen as that of the happy bridegroom. Both parties responded clearly and distinctly to the questions of the clergyman. General Lyon, with smiling lips, but moist eyes, gave the bride away. And the ceremony proceeded and ended amid the prayers and blessings of the whole company.

Kisses and congratulations, tears and smiles followed, and took up twice as much time as the preceding solemnity had.

Then, at length, the company, led by the two marshals, marched off to the breakfast room. The ladies were handed to the table, and the gentlemen waited in duteous attendance behind them.

And the feast began.

These ladies did not care so much about the fish, flesh, or fowl, delicately dressed as these edibles might be. So they were left almost untouched, for the benefit of the gentlemen who might come after. But the beautiful pyramids of pound cake, the snowy alps of frosted cream, the glittering glaciers of quivering jelly, the icebergs of frozen custard, the temples of crystalized sweetmeats, and groves of sugared fruits were quickly demolished.

The bride's cake was cut up and distributed; the piece containing the prophetic ring falling to the lot of Nanny Seymour.

At the right moment the first groomsman arose and made a speech, which was heartily cheered, and proposed the health of—

"The bride and bridegroom," which was honored with bumpers of "CLIQUOT."

Then the bridegroom arose and returned thanks in another speech, which was also cheered; and he proposed the health of—

"Our honored host and relative, the venerable General Lyon," which was drank by all standing.

Then the veteran got up and in a few earnest words expressed his appreciation of the compliment and his esteem for his guests, and then he gave somebody else's health.

Colonel Seymour arose and proposed the health of—

"Our beautiful young friend, Mrs. Alexander Lyon." And it was honored with enthusiasm.

Then some unlucky idiot had the mishap to rise and name—

"*Mr.* Alexander Lyon," tearfully adding—"'Though lost to sight, to memory dear.'"

And a panic fell upon all that part of the company who knew or suspected the state of the case with that interesting absentee.

But old General Lyon quickly dispelled the panic. Would that true gentleman suffer Drusilla's feelings to be wounded? No indeed. He was the very first to fill his glass and rise to his feet. His example was followed by all present. And unworthy Alick's health was drank with the rest. And while the brave old man honored the toast with his lips, he prayed in his heart for the prodigal's reformation and return.

And oh! how Drusilla understood and loved and thanked him!

Other speeches were made and other toasts drank.

Then tea and coffee were handed around.

And one set of feasters gave way to another, like the flies in the fable of old.

The rising set immediately went out upon the lawn, where the brass band was in full play on their stand and where quadrilles were formed upon the greensward.

The feasting in the house and the music and dancing on the lawn was kept up the whole of that bright May day, even to the going down of the sun.

Never before had the youth of the neighborhood had such a surfeit of frolicking. They voted that a marriage in May weather, and by daylight, with unlimited dance music, green sward, sunshine and sweetmeats, was the most delightful thing in the world.

In the very height of the festivities, at about four o'clock in the afternoon, the bride, attended by Drusilla, slipped quietly away to her own chamber and changed her bridal robes and veil for a travelling habit of silver gray Irish poplin, and a bonnet of gray drawn silk.

The travelling carriage had been quietly drawn up to the door where Richard Hammond waited to take away his bride, and General Lyon stood to bid farewell to his child.

When Anna was ready to go down, she turned and threw her arms around Drusilla's neck and burst into tears.

"Oh, Drusa!" she sobbed, "be good to my dear grandfather. Oh! love him, Drusa, for my sake! I was all he had left, and it must be so hard to give me up! Oh, Drusa, love him and pet him. He is old and almost childless. When I am gone, put little Leonard in his arms; it will comfort him; and stay with him as much as you can. It is so sad to be left alone in old age. But I know, my dear, you will do all you can to console him without my asking you."

"Indeed I will, dear Anna," said Drusilla, through her falling tears.

"I will not be gone long. I shall be back in three weeks at farthest. I do not like to leave him at his age. He is past seventy. His time may be short on earth. How can I tell? That was the reason why I would not go to Europe for my wedding tour. But oh, Drusilla, I did not know how much I loved my dear grandfather until this day. And to think that in the course of nature I *must* lose him some day, and may lose him soon," said Anna, weeping afresh.

"My darling Anna, your grandfather is a very strong and hale old man; his habits are regular and temperate, and his life quiet and wholesome. He is likely to live twenty or thirty years longer," answered Drusilla, cheerily.

"Heaven grant it," fervently breathed Anna.

And then she turned and went down stairs, followed by Drusilla.

"Good-bye, my darling. I will kiss you here. I must save the last one for my dear grandfather," said Anna, embracing her friend at the foot of the stairs.

"Good-bye, and Heaven bless you!" responded Drusilla, heartily.

Anna went forward to General Lyon, who took her in his arms, and smiling, kissed and blessed her. And his last words, as he gave her into the charge of her husband, were cheerful:

"You will have a delightful run by moonlight up the bay, my dear," he said.

Anna, striving to keep back her tears, let Dick lead her to the carriage, and place her in it. He immediately followed, and seated himself by her side. Old Jacob cracked his whip, and the horses started.

So quickly and quietly had this little scene passed, that the carriage was bowling along the avenue before the company on the lawn suspected what was being done.

Then, eager whispers of:

"The bride is going! the bride is going!" ran through the crowd.

And quadrilles were suddenly broken up, and dancers came flocking to the door, knowing that they were too late to bid her good-bye, yet still exclaiming to each other:

"The bride is going! the bride is going!"

"The bride is *gone*, my dear, young friends," said General Lyon, kindly, "but she leaves me to make her adieus, and to pray you not to let her departure interrupt your enjoyment. The bride and bridegroom have to meet the Washington steamer that passes the Stormy Petrel landing at about nine o'clock. Now, 'on with the dance!'"

And the young folks immediately took the old gentleman at his word, and the music struck up, and the dancing re-commenced.

And so Anna and Dick departed for Washington city on their way to New York.

Much discussion had been held on the subject of that marriage tour. Many suggestions had been made. Europe had been mentioned. But Anna had scouted *that* idea.

"None but a lunatic," she had said, "would ever think of taking a sea voyage, and risking sea-sickness in the honeymoon."

And for her part she positively declined putting Dick's love to so severe a test in the earliest days of their married life.

Such had been Anna's outspoken objection to the trip to Europe. But her secret objection was that it would take her too far and keep her too long from her beloved and venerable grandfather. So at last it had been settled to the satisfaction of all parties that they should make a tour of the Northern cities. And now they had gone.

But the wedding guests remained. The music and the dancing were kept up without flagging until the sun set, and the darkness and dampness of the night had come on.

Then the two self-appointed "marshals of the day" took upon themselves to pay and discharge the brass band.

The company soon followed the musicians, and old Lyon Hall was once more left to peace and quietness.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

A HORSE LAUGH.—Why is the imputation of obstreperous laughter laid to the charge of the graceful, silent horse? Horses do not laugh! Should it not rather be saddled upon some long-eared biped?

—He who is always in want of something cannot be very rich! 'Tis a poor wight who lives by borrowing the words, decisions, mien, invention, and actions, of others.

I WONDER IF SHE CARES FOR ME?

BY MRS. M. A. KIDDER.

I love a maiden sweet and fair,
With azure eyes and auburn hair.
First, like an angel, pure and bright,
She dawned upon my 'raptured sight!
I've loved her long, I've loved her dear—
It seems like heaven when she is near;
And when her charming face I see,
I wonder if she cares for me?

I watch her form across the way,
And think her fairer every day;
I guard her in her morning walk,
And listen to her girlish talk;
And when upon her brow of snow
I see the blushes come and go,
Like rosy clouds, so warm and free,
I wonder if she cares for me.

Sometimes I'm just upon the brink
Of telling her the thoughts I think
Of all my love and deep despair—
When something whispers, "Never dare!"
And so I worship her afar,
Like some heaven-born and radiant star;
Yet, when that tell-tale blush I see,
I wonder if she cares for me.

Thus shall I let the hours pass by,
Until some braver man than I
Shall win the prize, and wear it too?
No! surely that would never do!
I'll try—Oh, Cupid, grant me this!—
A loving answer—ah, 'tis, "*Yes!*"
My heart leaps up—our loves agree—
And now I *know* she cares for me!

THE EVIL GENIUS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF "THE WHITE TERROR," "WARNING VOICE," "THE FATAL ERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

The early morning drive through the forest road, with the soft sea air fanning her cheeks, and the songs of the birds filling their leafy home with jubilant music, were all delightful to the young traveller, and she thought that, after all, life might yet, for her, have something that was worth enjoying, even if past love had proved a bubble.

A few miles were rapidly passed over, and the carriage drew up at the landing just as the steamer rounded to.

"You are just in time, Miss," said Dick, assisting her to alight. "I've put a lad to hold my horses, and if you'll 'low me, I'll see you safe aboard."

"Thank you, Dick. I shall be much obliged, for I should scarcely know how to go by myself."

"I s'pose not, Miss Inez. But I am to the fore now, and when you gits back to-morrer arternoon, I'll try and be here in time to see you safe off the boat."

Inez nodded approval, and moved along by his side, glad to have his protection. Dick found her a seat on deck, placed her satchel beside her chair, and then sought out the captain, a bluff, hard-swearing man, to ask him to pay some attention to his unprotected young passenger.

Captain Owens hastily said:

"Aye, aye—of course I'll look after the gal. Oakland landing, is it? We'll get there by four o'clock. Always stop five minutes there, so there'll be plenty of time for her to get off. Want to know at what hour I'll be back here to-morrow afternoon? Oh yes—I understand. At six, or half after. That's the ticket, my man."

The curious oaths with which these sentences were interlarded, would baffle any one save a phonetic scholar to spell. They were quite original, for the captain had been strictly educated, and thought swearing, as understood by others, a sin; but the expletives coined by himself he regarded as a clever compromise.

"The d—l will never know that I am cussing," he said, "and as to the good man, *He* knows that a fellow can't run a boat without some motive power besides steam."

He did not mean to be irreverent, nor was he deficient in kindness, for he soon found time to come to the side of the lonely girl and assure her that at four o'clock he would see her on shore at Oakland himself.

Inez thanked him, and settled herself for the pleasant voyage across the bay. The day was charming, the awning overhead sheltered her from the too ardent rays of the sun, and the buoyant air seemed to fill her languid frame with a portion of its own elasticity.

There was no one to interrupt the dreamy reverie into which Inez soon fell, for there was but one other passenger on deck beside herself, and he seemed deeply absorbed in the pages of a book he held in his hand.

He was a pale, fair young man, with colorless hair, and that smooth white sleekness of appearance that was peculiarly repulsive to Inez, and she scarcely gave him a second look; if she had done so, she would soon have discovered that the stranger was more interested in watching her fair face than in the volume he was pretending to read.

She seemed to attract him more and more, for he finally made some movements preliminary to opening a conversation with her. Inez no sooner became aware of this, than she hastily took out a volume of Tennyson, with which she had furnished herself as a refuge against her own thoughts, and absorbed herself so completely in it, that the stranger finally strolled away and left her alone.

At two o'clock dinner was served, and the captain came himself to conduct her below. She found several other passengers in the cabin, but made no attempt to join in the conversation that took place over the table. Glad to get back into the open air again, she passed the time in alternate dreaming and reading, till the bluff voice of Captain Owens spoke close beside her.

"Here we are, Miss; in five minutes more you'll be at your place, and I'm glad to say that I've found a beau for you. I could only have put you ashore myself, but this young fellow says he'll see you safe to the house, seeing as he's going there himself to see his uncle, Mr. Wilkins. He says his name is the same, and yours is Lopez, I believe, so I hope, Miss, that you think I've done the right thing by finding a escort for such a slip of a gal as you seem to be."

The sandy-haired stranger was standing just behind the captain, and after this singular introduction Inez could do no less than bow to Wilkins junior, and thank him for his proffered politeness, though she earnestly wished that he had chosen some other time for his visit to his relatives.

Inez was annoyed to find that Mr. Wilkins was the same individual who had sat near her earlier in the day, and she shrank from the thought of her visit to Oakland becoming known to this prying, sleek-looking young man, who would certainly seek to discover why she was sent on such an errand, in place of dispatching an order to his uncle for the books that her father wanted.

Mr. Wilkins very politely took her sachel from her hand, and moved jauntily beside her, offering only such assistance as was needed till she stood safely on a sloping bank of turf some distance above the landing, sheltered from the sun by a cluster of oak trees from which the place took its name.

Scattered over the undulating ground which lay between the ancient-looking house and the water's edge, were groups of the same trees, but they were unpruned, and the ground beneath them was covered with short undergrowth which gave a forlorn and deserted air to the place.

The house itself was a large, square structure of red brick, with a wing running back toward a kitchen garden, and at the opposite end the tower in which the library was situated.

Poultry and pigs wandered at will over the large inclosure, the gate to which was secured by a padlock carefully fastened. When Mr. Wilkins ascertained this, and he saw no movement in the house as if any one meant to come to open it, he asked, in surprise:

"Was not my uncle informed of your intention to visit the place, Miss Lopez? *I* came unexpectedly myself, but when I heard that you were on your way here, I took it for granted there would be somebody to meet you."

Inez had not anticipated such a reception as this, and she was reluctantly forced to explain:

"My father did not consider it necessary to inform Mr. Wilkins of my intention to come to Oakland for a few hours. I only wish to see the old place, visit the library, and get from it some books for which my aunt, Mrs. Hawks, has given an order. Armed with that, it never occurred to me that anything else would be necessary."

The light eyes of the young man rested on her with an expression of shrewd inquiry, but he was apparently satisfied with the explanation offered, and immediately said:

"It's a lucky thing for you that I happened along to-day, Miss Lopez, for you could never have made your voice heard at the house, and if you could have got inside of that gate, you might have been severely injured by a fierce dog my uncle keeps. Nipper knows me, and I shall risk nothing in jumping the fence, so if you are not afraid to remain here alone a few moments, I will hurry up to the house and bring the key of the gate."

Inez glanced around; the steamer was receding in the distance, and the whole scene seemed steeped in the very spirit of seclusion and peace. She smiled as she replied:

"I should be a terrible coward, indeed, if I were afraid to be left here a few moments. While you are away, I will use my eyes in becoming familiar with the scenes in which my mother's girlhood was passed. I really think it was most fortunate for me, Mr. Wilkins, that you chanced to visit your uncle to-day."

He bowed with a singular expression, and replied:

"Then I will be off, and back again as soon as possible."

The words had scarcely passed his lips before he bounded lightly over the fence, and plunged into a narrow pathway that led toward the house. Soon afterward the deep baying of a dog was heard, and an immense English bull-terrier came bounding toward him with open mouth and fiery eyes.

But he seemed suddenly to recognize an old acquaintance, for he paused in his wild career, and then crouched at the feet of the young man with a whine of welcome.

"So-ho, old Nipper! you know me, do you? That's right—down in the dust at the feet of your master! There—there—that will do. Come now, old fellow, I can't afford to lose sight of you—just get!"

The dog sullenly obeyed the motion of his hand toward the house, though he evidently wished to go on a further quest. Nipper scattered the chickens and ducks that congregated near the house by flying in among them with his deep-mouthed bark; but Wilkins called him to order, and, after leading him into a narrow side-hall, he closed the door upon him.

This entrance was between the main portion of the building and the wing occupied by the tenants. A narrow staircase wound upward from it, and on the right hand was a door which opened into a square room of respectable size. Beyond that was the kitchen, and Wilkins went on to the inner shrine, in which he expected to find his uncle's wife engaged in the congenial occupation of cooking supper.

As he had anticipated, Mrs. Wilkins was there, and she seemed greatly surprised at the sight of her visitor. She was a fair, sandy-haired woman, with a good-humoured though not very sharp face. She took her hands from the dough she was kneading, and exclaimed:

"Do tell! you here ag'in, Sammy? Why, 'taint more'n a week since you went away. I can't see what can bring you so often to this out o' the way place."

"I am sorry that you are not glad to see me, Aunt Hannah, but I've no time to explain what brought me here now. I have the pleasure of informing you that I am not your only guest to-day. I left a young lady outside of the gate waiting for admittance, and I have come for the key."

"A young lady! La sakes, Sammy, I hope you ain't gone an' got married afore you've made anything to live on. If ye *have*, ye needn't be a-bringing of the gal here to be tuck care of."

Wilkins laughed unpleasantly.

"You need have no fear of such a catastrophe as that, Aunt Hannah. I know how to take care of number one too well to commit such an imprudence. I only wish this young lady *was* my wife, though, for she'll own every foot of the land we're standing on before long. It is Miss Lopez, and she has been sent here by her father on some fool's errand about books from the library, so please give me the key at once."

"Goodness! one of the old stock. She mustn't be kept waiting outside the gate no how. There's the key; but if your uncle says anything about the gate being opened without his knowledge, you must take the blame on yourself. Tom Wilkins is a curious fellow, and not so good-tempered as he might be."

Her nephew scarcely listened to the last words. He seized the key, leaving the dog a prisoner in the house, and, springing out, hurried to the spot on which he had left Inez standing.

The gate was unlocked, and together the two wound through the narrow pathway leading to the house. By the time they gained the open space in front of the stately portico, the door was opened, and Mrs. Wilkins, with a clean apron and newly-smoothed hair, stood on its threshold ready to welcome the last descendant of the Horton family to the homestead of her grandfather. She glibly said:

"You've took me quite unawares, Miss Lopez, but you're welcome to the old place all the same. You're just one of the family that's visited Oakland in the fifteen year we've lived here; but I'm sorry you didn't let me know you was a-coming, and you shouldn't have been kept waiting at the gate so long. Sakes alive! if Sammy here hadn't come along, I don't know how you a-got in anyhow!"

To this address, Inez smilingly replied:

"I did not know that I was coming myself till yesterday evening, Mrs. Wilkins, but I hope my brief visit will not be an inconvenience to you. I only came to look over the old place; to see the library, and select from it some books which my aunt has been kind enough to allow my father the use of."

"Books, is it, that you've come after, Miss? You'll find 'em all right, for nobody has meddled with 'em but Sammy there, and he was only 'lowed to read and dust 'em, without taking any on 'em away. My husband wouldn't let him do that nohow."

While speaking, Mrs. Wilkins led the way into a wide, handsomely proportioned vestibule entirely destitute of furniture, and unclosed a door of carved oak on the left hand side, which gave into a large apartment, the floor of which was covered with a faded Brussels carpet.

She threw open one of the massive shutters, and the light from a tall curtainless window fell upon the Louis Quatorze sofas, and chairs, covered with damask that had once been scarlet, but had now passed into the sere and yellow leaf of portrait decay.

Several family portraits hung upon the walls, and among them, Inez was surprised to find one of her grandfather, which, at a glance, she knew had been painted by Stuart. That, at least, she thought, would have been removed by his daughter, on account of the value of the painting, if from no feeling of reverence for the original.

It represented Mr. Horton in his youth, in the powder and queue worn in the latter half of the last century. He was a handsome, but weak looking man, and Inez wondered if he really had possessed, at the last, decision enough to rescue the child of his cast-off daughter from dependence on his sister.

Mr. Wilkins placed the satchel of Inez on a table, and muttered something about the necessity of seeing his uncle on business. He hastily left the room, telegraphing to his aunt to follow him, and the two stood a few moments in the vestibule in earnest conversation.

Mrs. Wilkins then came back, and said:

"My nephew tells me that he can't stop here to entertain you, Miss, as I expected he would; and as I keep no help, I must excuse myself and go back to the kitchen to look after my supper. I must see to getting you something nice at once."

"Thank you, Mrs. Wilkins, but I am not at all hungry, and I beg that you will not put yourself to any trouble on my account. A cup of tea, and a slice of cold bread and butter, will be quite enough for me."

"Bless you, Miss, I can give you better than that, and Sammy must have something more substantial, too. *He* don't b'lieve in no sich wishy washy stuff as tea. I aint got no store tea nohow, but I guess sassafrax or sage will do jest as well."

"Sage tea! that is a medicine, and so is the other. I believe I will not trouble you to make tea at all if you please, Mrs. Wilkins. I like milk for supper, and you can give me a glass of that."

"But there's plenty o' them yerbs, and I jest as leave make the tea as not, Miss Lopez," persisted the woman, "on hospitable thoughts intent."

"I beg that you will not do so for me, for I could not drink either of the teas you mentioned. It is of little consequence what is set before me."

"Jest hear to that now! 'taint o' no consequence what you get in this yer house where your mother, and her father afore her was born? I'd be afeard o' their ghosts haunting me if I didn't do the best I can for the credit o' the place, Miss Lopez. But I won't keep you talking no longer, for you look tired like, and you had better lie down on the sofy there, and rest a bit."

Inez was glad to avail herself of this advice, for she was still too weak to sit up all day. She drew the sofa cushion beneath her head, listened to the receding echo of footsteps as Mrs. Wilkins and her nephew went toward the rear of the house, and then gave up her fancy to the thoughts that crowded on it.

But soon they mingled, faded away, and the fatigue of the day threw her into a sweet, and refreshing sleep.

Little faith as Inez had in her father's visions, one now came to herself that impressed her vividly. She thought that the portrait of her grandfather, which hung over the sofa on which she reclined, suddenly bent forward, and in a voice of deep sorrow, spoke these words:

"Too late!—*too late!* Why did you not come a day, a few hours sooner. Awake! be up and doing now, and you may save all. But no—it is too late—*too late!*"

Inez started up with the thrilling sounds of that weird warning ringing in her ears, and saw before her Mrs. Wilkins, who was saying:

"I am sorry to disturb you, Miss Lopez; but my supper is ready, and the light biscuits will spile if they bakes too long, and it's getting late—very late."

The words seemed almost an echo of those she had heard in her dream, and Inez smiled as she thought how easily her vision had dissolved into something so commonplace as the announcement of a late supper. She saw that the sun was setting, and she arose and smoothed her hair before the large mirror which occupied the space between two of the windows.

Mrs. Wilkins then led the way to the kitchen, or living room, as she called it. This was gained by crossing a long piazza, at the back of the back of the house on which it opened. Inez found herself in a large oblong room, with a rag carpet on the floor, and a stove in the farthest end of the apartment. Closets in the walls concealed the cooking utensils, and on a charcoal furnace on the wide hearth the tea kettle was merrily singing.

The welcome aroma of what Mrs. Wilkins called "store tea," greeted Inez on her entrance, and her hostess said in explanation:

"Sammy brought some from town to-day, Miss. When he was here last week he turned up his nose at the sassafrax tea I made for him, and told me he'd bring me something better the next time he came. It's lucky for you that he did so, I guess, for you look as if you want something to set you up. Been sick, I guess?"

"Yes—I have lately had a slight attack of illness from which I have not entirely recovered."

"La sakes! and yet you come all the way here by yourself, as one may say, for Sammy didn't know anything about you till jest afore you got off the boat. Why didn't yer par come hisself now?"

"My father's health is so delicate that he rarely leaves the house," replied Inez. "He thought the trip would benefit me, and I was glad of an excuse to visit a place that is so interesting to me as this one. But what has become of your nephew?"

"Oh, *he's* had his supper, and he'll be off agin on the night boat. He only came to see his uncle 'bout a law suit he's 'tending to for him, for Sammy's a mighty 'cute lawyer. As soon as he got a bite he went out in the harvest field to see Tom, and he was off without ever coming back to the house at all."

Inez was most happy to hear of this unexpected deliverance from the espionage of Mr. Wilkins, and she ate the broiled chicken and toast which had been prepared for her with much more enjoyment than if he had been sitting opposite to her at the neatly spread table. She found that she must have slept two hours, for the sun had by this time sunk to rest amid a flood of golden glory which afforded assurance of a brilliant day on the morrow.

Inez was glad of this, for now she was actually at Oakland, she wished to roam over the place and visit every spot of interest it contained. She inquired for the key of the library, and Mrs. Wilkins said:

"It's in the door now, Miss Lopez. Sammy went in there while I was a fixing the supper, to set things to rights a little. Not that the place aint kept strait enough, but when the lad was here not long ago he used that ere room to read in and to keep his guns and fishing-tackle in. But he's cleared 'em all out now, and I guess there's nothing left that don't belong there."

"You guess; why didn't you go and make

sure, Hannah Wilkins?" asked a gruff voice so close to Inez that it made her start and turn quickly in the direction of the speaker. He nodded his head to Inez and went on:

"*I* have always found it necessary to look after that nephew of mine, for he is as careless as—as—nobody ought to be. I've been into the libr'y myself, and I found that he had left his memorandum book behind him. I'm blessed though if anybody can make out a thing that's in it, for it's all writ in shorthand. He's a 'cute chap, careless as he is. Your servant, Miss," and Mr. Wilkins made a more respectful bow to the young girl who he knew was the next heir to the property on which he lived.

He was a large, healthy looking man, with fair complexion, light blue eyes, and a coarse under jaw. He looked shrewder than his wife, but it was evident that neither of them was above the average of common farm hands in either manners or education.

Inez explained to Wilkins the object of her visit, and he offered to accompany her at once to the library that she might see with what care the books had been kept.

Finding that he had already taken his supper with his nephew, Inez gladly accepted his offer, and rising, followed him toward the front building.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Crossing the back gallery, Mr. Wilkins entered the rear hall communicating with the vestibule. From this a door opened into a handsome room meagerly furnished with a camp bedstead, a plain writing table, wash-stand, and chairs of black walnut. A faded carpet covered the floor, and a wide old-fashioned sofa stood between two large windows, which had been opened to admit the evening air.

Wilkins strode across the floor and in the farthest corner threw open a door which gave admittance to the tower which Mr. Horton had added to his house, to be first used as a dressing-room for his wife, and after her death to be converted into a library.

It was an octagon room, chiefly lighted through a ground glass dome, for the narrow slits of windows filled with colored glass were more ornamental than useful.

A circular table, on which was a reading lamp with its bright green shade, occupied the centre of the floor, and several heavily carved chairs were drawn up near it. The book-cases were built in the wall, with doors filled in with small squares of glass set in fantastic arabesque patterns, and over each one was a niche filled with alternate busts of American and foreign celebrities. Washington and Franklin, Mirabeau and Napoleon were there, and over the door was that of the man Mr. Horton believed the greatest Roman of them all—Andrew Jackson.

Mr. Wilkins talked a great deal, and explained to Inez many things in his clumsy fashion, but she scarcely listened to him. Her thoughts were in that book-case on the left hand, and she was glad to see that a flight of steps used for mounting to the highest shelves was in the room. She asked:

"Can I gain access to all these cases, Mr. Wilkins? I have quite a list of books which my father wishes me to take to him. But I utterly forgot to bring a trunk to pack them in."

"Oh, that's no matter, Miss; we can find a box, I guess, to nail 'em up in; but if you mean to take many of 'em away with you, I'd like to have the order of Mrs. Hawks to prove that I only did what she wanted done."

"Of course—that is but right. Here it is. You know my aunt's writing, and if you choose you can keep the order."

Inez produced the few lines written by her aunt, authorizing her father to send for any books he might desire to remove from the Oakland library, and after glancing over it, Wilkins said:

"It's all reg'lar, Miss. I knows Mrs. Hawks' writing well enough, for she often sends orders about what's to be done on the place. Them doors aint got no locks on 'em, except one, and I see the key is in that."

He pointed to the very case on which the attention of Inez was fixed, and went on:

"I don't know why *that* one was kept locked any more'n the others, for the books in it aint any more valuable than them that's on the other shelves; but I s'pose 'twas a fancy of the old master's. I've heard tell that he was a notionate man."

Inez glanced over the books and saw that the upper shelves were filled with Greek and Latin classics, and the lower with standard works in French and German. She said:

"Those volumes are more costly than English books, and that is the reason, I suppose, why they were better taken care of."

"Mebbe so, Miss; and now while you have some daylight left, I'll leave you to look out what you want, while I attend to my chores. You can jest lay the books out on the table, and I'll pack 'em for you in the morning before I go out to my work."

"Thank you; I will not detain you any longer then. I can easily attend to what brought me here without any assistance."

Wilkins nodded, shuffled out of the room, and when Inez could no longer hear the echo of his steps, she sprang to the step ladder and after some effort succeeded in drawing it near enough to the case in which her investigation was to be made to enable her to reach the top shelf with ease.

It was the work of a few moments to remove four large volumes which filled the corner so minutely described by her father, and in a painful flutter of excitement, she stooped forward and felt for the spring she had been assured must be found there.

At one point she found a crevice wide enough to permit the fingers to penetrate an inch below the edge of the shelf, and after moving them carefully over the space, to her surprise and delight they came in contact with what seemed a small protuberance.

Pressing with all her force on this, to her intense amazement Inez saw the wooden back slide slowly down, disclosing an aperture contrived in the brick wall beyond.

It was a square cavity, formed by removing two bricks each way in the thickness of the wall; but, carefully as it had been concealed, there was nothing in it to repay the excited girl for the trouble of making a visit to the place.

"Poor papa, what will he say—what will he do now?" was her first thought; and utterly unnerved by the breaking down of the hope which had sprung to life on finding her father's vision partly verified, Inez came down from her uncomfortable perch, and sat down to try and compose herself sufficiently to replace the books she had taken down before the return of Wilkins.

This she had ample time to accomplish, for the farmer had many things to attend to before his morning's work was finished.

Inez had not permitted herself to hope for a successful result to the strange quest on which she had been sent, yet she was deeply depressed by the ineffectual discovery she had made. The receptacle so singularly made known to her father was there, but its contents had disappeared, by what agency it was now impossible to discover.

That her aunt was ignorant of its existence she felt assured, for she did not believe that Mrs. Hawks would be capable of defrauding her of her just rights; and if such a document as her father had described had been concealed at Oakland with her knowledge, her conduct could bear no other interpretation, for by her orders it must have been removed to leave the fate of her niece entirely at her mercy.

Inez rejected this suspicion. She scarcely thought of the disappointment as it affected herself; she was too deeply dreading what might happen to her father when she told her story on her return home.

She regained her composure as well as she could, and began to select the books he had desired to have. A dozen volumes comprised the whole of them, and when Mr. Wilkins returned, they were laid on the table ready to be removed.

By this time twilight had gathered round her, and Inez pointed to the volumes and carelessly said:

"Those are all I shall take with me, Mr. Wilkins. I must leave to-morrow on the same boat I came over on, and I shall be glad if you will have them packed in time. I will go out now, and walk about a little. Your dog will not molest me, I suppose?"

"Oh no, Miss; I've taken good care of that, and Nipper's fastened up safe enough. I never 'lows him the run of the place when strangers is about, for he's a dangerous customer. In a lonesome country place like this, a good dog is worth a great deal. I lock the gate to keep stragglers out, and old Nip. knows it's his business to keep things straight and square inside the enclosure. That's what he's kept for, and he's smart enough to know it, Miss."

"I dare say," replied Inez, vaguely; and, occupied with her own thoughts, she moved dreamily toward the front entrance, and descending the flight of steps leading into the yard, made her way through the tangled undergrowth till she came to a half-ruined summer house which commanded a beautiful view of the bay and the surrounding country.

This spot her father had often described to her. Here he had sat with her mother; here he had won her consent to become his bride; and here the elopement they subsequently made had been planned.

Inez also knew that her mother's remains had been brought back to the home of her youth to be laid in the family burying ground, and she turned into a narrow, weed-grown pathway which led across a gentle hill into a picturesque valley beyond, in which arose the monuments of the deceased members of the Horton family, enclosed by a handsome iron railing.

The one erected to the memory of her grandfather was the most imposing, and beneath its shadow was a plain marble slab bearing the simple inscription:

"Sacred to the memory of Susan Horton Lopez, born Anno Domini 1810, Died A. D. 1833, aged 23 years.—*Requiescat in pace.*"

A cross was carved beneath, and before this symbol of her faith Inez knelt and prayed fervently.

If the spirit of her mother had indeed led her hither, it must have been to make this pious pilgrimage to her tomb; and with the consoling faith of the Catholic, she prayed for the repose of the souls of the two who lay there side by side peacefully enough, in spite of the gulf which had opened between them while living.

The summer moon was shining brightly when she arose, and slowly and pensively returned to the house. She found Mrs. Wilkins preparing to go in search of her, and she said in explanation of her anxiety:

"The dew's bin falling some time, Miss, and you don't look strong enough to stand much. I've got a nice cup of sage tea ready for you, and if you'll drink it I think it will be good for you."

"Thank you, Mrs. Wilkins, for the kindness of your intention; but you have taken more trouble than was necessary on my account. I am afraid that I must be ungrateful enough to decline the sage tea, as I never drink anything of the kind."

"La sakes! but it's the best thing in natur' for weak and ailing people. As to the trouble, that's neither here nor there. The tea's made, and you'll drink a little of it, I guess, and you really look as if you want something to strengthen you. I'll bring a cup of it to your room anyhow. And that 'minds me—I hope you aint afeard to sleep in a room by yourself; for the only one fit to put you in is that one j'ining the libr'y, where old Mr. Horton used to sleep hisself. 'Taint so far off from me and Tom, for the back window looks out to our part of the house, and if you was to call out in the night we'd hear you easy enough."

"When I am at home I sleep in a room alone, Mrs. Wilkins, and I do not think that I shall be afraid to do so here, though the place is strange to me. There is a good lock on the door, I suppose."

"Oh, yes; the fastenings is in the best of order, for Wilkins is something of a locksmith, and he 'tends to that, as Mrs. Hawks 'lows him something for keeping things 'bout the house in repair. You'll excuse him for not coming to speak with you again, Miss; for he's dead tired with working all day in the harvest field, and he's gone to bed half an hour ago."

"Has Mr. Wilkins no one to assist him?"

"We don't keep a hired man. The place ain't large, and with help now and then, Tom manages to get along very well, since Sammy left us. Sammy lived with us from the time he was a little fellow, but he got above farm work, and was sent away to school. Then he studied law, and now he's doing business for himself down to Newport. He's the junior partner, and I guess he does a good deal of the work without getting much of the profits, as is apt to be the case when young men like him gets into business with long-headed men what's got a good start. But Sammy don't complain; not he. He says that his turn will come some day, and then he'll show the stuff he's made of."

Inez vaguely wondered if it was honest or reliable stuff, but as the future of Wilkins junior was of the least possible interest to her, she made no comment on his aunt's communications.

She was really glad to retire to the room prepared for her, and even consented to taste the nauseous beverage Mrs. Wilkins hastened to bring into her, though she declined doing more than that in spite of the good woman's praises of it as the best remedy extant for nearly every bodily ailment to which flesh is heir.

With a disappointed look, she took up the cup and asked:

"Can I do anything more for you, Miss Lopez? You have only to speak to command me."

"Nothing more, thank you. I can wait on myself, and I have night clothes, brushes, and combs in my satchel. I shall be asleep in ten minutes after I get into bed."

"I hope so, Miss; and I'm sure that nothing will happen to disturb you. The dog barking around the house is the only sound I hear at night, but he'll not disturb you, for Tom has shet him up in a outhouse to stay there till you go away. He's a mighty smart dog, but he's too sharp to be kept around when strangers is on the place."

"Will he not be needed as a guard to-night? He could be shut up in the morning again before I am ready to go out."

"So he might; but Tom has put him up, and I guess he'll have to stay where he is all night. *I* wouldn't go after him for my right hand, for as well as he knows me, Nipper would be likely to jump at me, and nearly tear me in pieces if I went nigh him after he's been shet up a spell. He ain't to be trusted nohow."

With this assertion, Mrs. Wilkins nodded, and was about to leave the room when the eyes of her young guest suddenly fell upon a small enamel picture on which the full glare of the lamp fell. For a moment she thought it was the face of Nina Gordon looking down upon her from the wall, but a second glance showed her that the dress of the portrait was of the fashion of a past day, and arresting the departing steps of Mrs. Wilkins, Inez asked:

"Whose picture is that? It is strangely like a young girl I have lately met."

"That! Oh, *she* aint one of the family; but she was a great favorite with your grandpa, I've heard tell; and when a great painter came here to take the pictures of his darters, Mr. Horton would have Anna Moore's painted at the same time. It's always hung there since my time, just as the old gentleman placed it himself."

"Who was Anna Moore, and how came my grandfather to be so fond of her?"

"She was only the housekeeper's darter, but she was pretty, and smart, and Mr. Horton had her eddicated with your ma and Mrs. Hawks, but when they all growed up, poor Anna found out that she was spiled for people of her own sort, and them that was above her wouldn't look at her as one o' theirselves. There was some strange things told about her, but I don't mind 'em much now, it's so long ago; and she's been married many a year ago to some man in Virginny that they say has made a fortin.' Some people's born with a silver spoon in their mouths, you know the old saying is, but I guess that Anna Moore found some bitter in the portion it held before a good time came for her."

"She had trials, then, before she was prosperous?"

The woman shook her head mysteriously:

"Yes, many hard trials; but 'taint good to rip up old stories, and what folks said of her shouldn't be repeated to a young thing like you. Good night, Miss Lopez; I hope you'll have only pleasant dreams in the old house that will be your own some day, my husband says."

The door closed on her, and after a faint sigh given to the uncertainty of Mr. Wilkins' prediction proving true, Inez took up the lamp and examined the face which had so struck her. She saw that the resemblance between the picture and Nina Gordon lay in the peculiar eyes, and the color of the hair. The turn of the head was also the same, but the mouth of Anna Moore was sad and earnest, while that of Nina was mocking and mirthful.

"Strange," she muttered, "that the girl who is using every effort to supplant me in my aunt's favor, should look so like one who was reared with her and my mother. Miss Gordon knows nothing of her family, and Mrs. Wilkins evidently hinted at something wrong about the original of this picture. I wonder if the two can be linked together in any way. But I am too tired to think about it, and all the thinking I could do would not help me to a solution of the mystery."

Thus thinking, Inez prepared herself for repose. She locked the door, lowered the lamp, and set it in the fire-place, then, after praying devoutly, she took refuge in the comfortable bed with its lavender-scented linen, and composed her mind to sleep.

Wearied with the varied excitements of the day, Inez soon fell into a sound slumber, which must have lasted several hours, for when she awoke she found the room in darkness, and she started out of her sleep with the consciousness that some one beside herself was in the apartment.

She was certain that she could distinguish a faint sound of breathing not far distant from her bed, but her terror was so extreme that she had no voice to cry out and give the alarm, even if Wilkins and his wife could have heard her in their distant room.

Inez lay nearly breathless with fear and excitement, dreading what might happen next, when suddenly the door of the library was thrown open, and a thin stream of light flashed across the darkness.

A suppressed voice said:

"Hist, Jemmy, what are you doing in there? Come back, and let us get away. There is nothing here; that cursed fellow has been too sharp for me, and the papers are gone. There is nothing further to be done here, so we had better hurry and be gone, too."

To this another voice replied in guarded tones

"There's somebody in this room. I found a lamp burning, and a woman's toggery lying around. She's awake by this time, I dare say, and you had better say something to her to keep her from giving an alarm. If anybody should find out about this nocturnal visit, we might get into trouble."

"*Diable*," exclaimed the first speaker, "that is a bad lookout. I shouldn't like to do anybody a violence, but if old Wilkins comes out with that brute of a dog, I shall be compelled to use my six-shooter in self-defence. You speak to the woman yourself; tell her to keep quiet, and we'll go away from here no better off than when we came. Let her understand that we are not house-breakers, and all we came for was a bundle of papers that can't be found."

By this time Inez had regained a portion of her self-control, but in the irrepressible excitement of the moment she forgot the danger in which herself might be placed, and eagerly spoke from the darkened corner in which she lay:

"Who are you, and what use did you intend to make of the papers to which you refer?"

"Good Heavens! that is the voice of Miss Lopez herself! What on earth brought *her* here? Come out of that, Jemmy, and let me speak to her."

Inez saw the outline of a head in the faintly-illumined doorway, but a large slouched hat concealed the features of the man's face, and he was evidently making an effort to disguise his voice:

"Don't be afraid, Miss, I am not coming into your room, and if you will only be quiet we will go away, and no harm will be done. I must explain to you, Miss Lopez, that the errand that brought me here is one of deep interest to you. I hoped to serve you, I swear I did, or I would never have undertaken such a job as this."

"In what way, sir?" asked Inez in as firm a tone as she could command.

"I will tell you. In a hole cleverly concealed in the wall of that room I hoped to find the last will executed by your grandfather, and restore it to you, on certain conditions of course, for I do not pretend to be entirely disinterested in this affair. It has been taken away, but I am sure that I can follow up the party that has gained possession of it and make him produce it at the proper time. That is, I will engage to do so for—a consideration."

"You must confer with my father on that subject, sir, and now I beg that you will leave this room at once, and I promise not to raise an alarm."

"It will be better not to do so, Miss. If you can answer one question before I go I shall be very glad: Do you know if Sam Wilkins has been on these premises lately?"

"He was here a few hours to-day and was alone, I know, in the library. Do you suspect him of taking the will from its hiding place?"

"That's neither here nor there; I shall settle with *him* about that. Remember that I am on *your* side, Miss Lopez, and I'll see justice done you yet. Good night! If you will keep quiet about this nocturnal intrusion, I will promise profound secresy on the part of my friend and myself. I may as well tell you that we effected an entrance through the dome, and we shall make our exit the same way. I am only sorry that we failed to get what we came for, but you need not lose heart; the will shall be forthcoming yet,—I pledge my word to that."

The door was softly closed, but no further sound came, and, after recovering from her perturbation, Inez vainly tried to comprehend the singularity of the adventure through which she had just passed. She slept no more that night, and when the early morning light penetrated to her room, she arose and made her toilette, that she might investigate the condition of things in the library.

She found nothing amiss. The sides of the lantern-like dome were constructed to open on hinges to admit air into the room, and through one of these the nocturnal visitors had doubtless effected their entrance and escape.

The books they had removed from the shelf still lay upon the table, and the recess in the wall was open. Thus Inez became convinced that the place indicated in her father's dream had actually been the hiding-place of the document it was so important to her to find. Bitter and vain were the regrets she felt, that she had been so dilatory in following up the clue that had been furnished to him. Had she possessed more faith in it and acted more promptly all might have been well; and poor Inez wept a few bitter tears over the disappointment of which she must be the bearer on her return home.

She decided that it would be best to say nothing to Wilkins or his wife of the strange occurrences of the night, as she might thus unveil to them the real purpose of her own visit to Oakland.

She felt inclined to trust the assurance of the person who had spoken with her, that he was a friend to her cause, and she vaguely hoped that he would recover the will, and restore it to its lawful owner.

Inez tried to recal the tones of his voice and identify them, but the effort was vain; yet he seemed familiar with hers, for in spite of the terror, he had recognized it as soon as she spoke, and had called her name.

After closing the aperture, and replacing the books upon the shelf, Inez went out in search of Mrs. Wilkins. Early as she thought it, she found that the farmer had already had his breakfast, and gone out to his work.

"Du tell!" exclaimed the woman, "I'd no idee that you'd be up so soon as this, Miss Lopez. I'd a had everything ready for you if I'd only known that you was what Tom calls a early bird. But I'll have your tea and muffins ready in half an hour at the latest."

"I hoped that I should be in time to breakfast with yourself and your husband, Mrs. Wilkins; for I did not wish to put you to the trouble of preparing a second meal for me."

"Oh! as to that, Miss, I aint accustomed to spare myself, and what you eat aint any more'n the pecking of a sparrow. You jest walk 'round a spell, and your breakfast will be ready afore you have time to get hungry for it."

Inez left her, and went out on the front portico, from which she could see the mists slowly curling up from the face of the bay and floating in filmy wreaths toward the zenith, to be absorbed in the rays of the ardent summer sun, which, by this time, had risen above the verge of the horizon.

The air was vocal with the song of birds, and as she glanced over the neglected lawn, Inez thought what a pleasant home this must have been in her grandfather's time, and what an agreeable change from the sombre Glades this place would be for her father should it ever come into her possession.

Then her thoughts wandered away into the dim future, and she was surprised when the summons to breakfast came.

Mrs. Wilkins talked the whole time she was eating, for the good woman so rarely had a visitor that she was determined to make the most of her opportunity when one did come; but Inez was so deeply absorbed in her own thoughts that she scarcely listened to her.

She spent the morning in exploring the place, and when she returned to the house at noon, she found the books she had selected to take away nailed up in a small square box, and Wilkins ready for the dinner his wife was placing on the table.

When they were seated, he turned toward his young guest, and asked:

"Did you hear anything last night that frighted you, Miss? Steps, or something o' that sort? But 'taint likely that you did, for if you had, a young gal like you would have been sure to squall out and make a row. You needn't look so scared like, for no harm was done, though I'll swear that there was tracks around the yard this morning that nobody made what belongs here. If I hadn't shut Nipper up last night he'd ha' made mince-meat o' the man that made 'em; but I thought he'd bark and keep you awake, so I put the old guard in the cellar."

Inez was glad that he talked on without expecting an answer, but when he ceased speaking, she found voice to ask:

"Have you any idea who could have been on the place, Mr. Wilkins?"

"None—unless it was a couple of city chaps that came here a week ago and wanted me to leave 'em alone in the li'bry for half an hour. They offered me a hundred dollars if I would do so, and swore that not a book should be took away; that I might see for myself when I come back that everything was jest as I had left it. I had no notion of doing sich a thing, so I turned 'em out, telling 'em that if anything is hid away in the place I am bound to take care of it for its lawful owners."

"What did these men look like?" asked Inez, eagerly.

"They was good looking chaps enough, I dare say, when they had the hair off their faces; but they both had on false whiskers, and mustachers. One was a wiry little fellow with black eyes, and the other one was large, and fair, with grey eyes, and light hair. That one was mighty soft spoken, but his nice talk didn't make me trust him a bit more'n the other one, though I overheard *him* say:

"'Why don't you throttle him, Ben, and I'll keep guard over him till you get what you want?'

"The other one shook his head, and said in the same tone:

"'We'll try a better dodge than that. I don't want to get into trouble, for what we are about must be done quietly, or it will be of no benefit to *us*.'

"So they went away when they found they could do nothing with me, and I was glad enough to see 'em off. This morning when I saw them strange tracks, I thought they had taken advantage of Nipper's being shet up, and made good their entrance in the li'bry. But they wouldn't ha' done that without disturbing you, I guess, so I must ha' been mistaken."

Inez felt tempted to reveal the alarm she had had, but some undefined feeling that it would be best for her own interests to keep her own counsel, withheld her.

When dinner was over, Wilkins said:

"You'd better get on your bonnet, Miss, and walk with me down to the landing. The boat is due in fifteen minutes more, and the captain don't stop long when there's no freight to be took up."

In a short time Inez was ready to accompany him; Mrs. Wilkins put on her sun bonnet and walked with them, the farmer carrying the box of books as lightly as if it had been a lady's work bag.

Just as they reached the gate, the whistle of the approaching steamer was heard, and thanking Mrs. Wilkins for her attention, and taking a friendly leave of her, Inez followed the stalwart form of the farmer, and was soon safe on board the boat.

Wilkins had time to ascend to the deck, and find a seat for her before leaving. Inez offered him her hand, and smilingly said:

"Thank you, Mr. Wilkins; I shall not forget you nor your wife, and if it is ever in my power, I will return the kindness you have both shewn me."

"'Twan't much we could do for you, Miss, but sich as it was, you was welcome to, and I do hope that you will remember us when *your* day comes, though 'twan't no sich motive that made Hannah and me polite to one of the old stock."

The bell here sounded its warning, and the farmer hurried away, leaving Inez alone in a small crowd of pleasure-seekers who were on their way to Newport. But she evaded all attempts on the part of her fellow-passengers to open a conversation with her by taking out her volume of Tennyson, and absorbing herself in its pages.

The steamer set steadily for the opposite shore, and as the sun was nearing the horizon, it reached the point at which Miss Lopez was to land. Dick was already there with the carriage, and he came to the gangway to meet her. He reported her father about as usual, and after a rapid drive, Inez found herself once more beneath the gloomy shadows of the Glades, no better off than when she had left them.

When she went in her father greeted her with fiery excitement flashing from every feature of his expressive face.

"You have it, Inez? You have secured the deed that gives you independence—wealth? Show it to me at once, and relieve me from this intolerable suspense."

Inez burst in tears.

"Oh, papa! dear father, don't excite yourself so much. I—I have brought nothing back with me. My journey was a failure so far as securing the will was concerned, but I am now convinced that such a thing was actually concealed there. I believe that we shall recover it, so pray don't look so ghastly."

At her first words Lopez sunk back gasping for breath, a livid pallor overspreading his face; but he caught as eagerly at her last assurance as a drowning man clutches at a straw; the blood surged back from his heart, a faint tinge of color came to his sallow cheeks, and he found voice to say:

"You would not speak thus if you had not something important to reveal. Tell me at once what it is."

Inez found it very difficult to relate to him what had actually occurred during her stay at Oakland; but she finally managed to do so, and she pitied the keen disappointment she read in his eyes.

With a pathetic kind of a despair, he cried:

"It *was* there, after all, and yet the warning was vain. Oh! why, why did we not sooner act on it! But we have a clue. Young Wilkins must have gone there to gain possession of it; but I will threaten him with a prosecution, and force him to give it up. We are not groping in the dark as we were before."

"But he will deny it, papa, and we have no positive proof that such a thing was ever concealed at Oakland, unless the person who spoke with me last night chooses to come forward as our witness. He promised to serve me, and, strange as the whole thing seems, I am inclined to trust him. We can wait a little, and see what time will develop."

"Wait—wait—I have not long to do that, Inez, for I feel that my strength is failing me fast. This business must be settled one way or another before I die, or I shall not be able to rest quietly in my grave. I feel this evening as if old Hawks might outlive me, though the other day I was confident that mine is the best life of the two. Oh! if she should cheat me out of seeing you in possession of your grandfather's estate, I believe I could torment her in the other world!"

"Dear papa, don't talk so, I cannot bear it. Tell me how you have spent the time since I went away."

"In the clouds, of course; and now that I am compelled to come back to this weary earth, it is no wonder that you find me excitable and hard to manage. My darling, if I did not see you near me when I awake to the dreary realities around me, I should be glad to close my eyes upon the world forever. At last I am worn out—exhausted with the struggle to bear the sad monotony of my life; and if God would take me to his rest, I should be only too happy to enter upon it."

Inez sat down beside him, and soothed him with gentle and hopeful words, and he brightened under their influence till he began to look and feel as if there was something yet worth living for.

But her keen eyes detected a change for the worse in his condition, and she silently removed from his side the box of opium from which she knew he had heavily drugged himself during her absence.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

A Plain Truth.

No man has a right to marry till, in every human probability, assured that he can support a family in his own station. Mere love or improvident matches seldom turn out well: poverty comes, and there is so much self-reproach on either side, that gall is added to its bitterness; their tempers are soured, and they soon wish themselves unmarrird. But when trials assail an attached, a reasonable pair, sorrow unites them closer: the man, feeling how much depends on him, never flags in his exertion, and often recovers the lost step; if not, there is still consolation in his wife's unvarying love—in her sweet, noiseless sacrifices. In these uncertain times, there are few commercial men but have met with reverses; and they will often say, "Had it not been for those at home, I should have blown my brains out; I could not have stood it." Wife and children! they are a beacon to us in our troubled sea: we renew the struggle when ready to sink beneath the wave, and at last are saved. At the worst, when all is black—when friends are cooled or reproachful—when the cruellest doubts assail us—there is still one who respects and loves us; at home we are still dear.

Modesty.

Nothing is more amiable than true modesty, and nothing more contemptible than that which is false: the one guards virtue, the other betrays it. True modesty is ashamed to do anything that is repugnant to right reason; false modesty is ashamed to do anything that is opposite to the humor of those with whom the party converses. True modesty avoids everything that is criminal; false modesty everything that is unfashionable; the latter is only a general, undetermined instinct—the former is that instinct limited and circumscribed by the rules of prudence and religion.

—The humble man requests a favor as though he were unworthy to receive it; but the proud man asks for a favor in the same tone as he were granting one.

—Relatives are not necessarily our best friends; but they cannot do us an injury without being enemies to themselves.

DIME NOVEL HUNTER . COM
ROBINSON
ROBERT ROBINSON · IMAGINATIONRADIO.COM

JUNE VOICES.

BY NATHAN D. URNER.

I.

As through the vistas of the loveless life,
From the far future, come sweet murmurings—
Faint whispers promising surcease from strife
And dewy rest, like that contentment brings;
So, through the mists, cold airs and chilly showers
Of early Spring, was softly breathed the tune,
Sweet with the music of deep peace, warm hours
And steadfast sunshine in the lap of June.

II.

Now all the leaves have broadened in the glade,
And June, rich June, her queenly self, is here—
All good the golden promises she made,
With nobler largess and unsparing cheer.
From windy wolds, close copses and deep dells
A million voices swell the perfect tune—
Bird-sparkles, wind-notes, tinkling brooklet bells—
To sound the praises of imperial June.

III.

Down in the meadow, where the grass grows long,
The jay some carol of the lark purloins,
And the mad joyance of the thrush's song
In crystal chorus with the blackbird joins.
Up in the twinkles of the white-ash tree,
The oriole listens to the year's new tune,
Tests his shrill gamut improvisingly,
Then bursts with music, for he knows 'tis June.

IV.

The locust-gushes from the covert nook,
The booming bumble-bee's resounding bass,
And the glad treble of the happy brook,
Each in the world-wide harmony find place.
Silvery clear in the blithe morning hours,
Golden and deep in the long afternoon,
With head soft-pillowed in her lap of flowers,
Earth sings the praises of imperial June.

SCRAPS OF ADVENTURE.

FROM AN OLD SAILOR'S LOG-BOOK.

No. XI.

By SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.

CALCUTTA.—STORY OF THE BLACK HOLE.

On the next day after the duel three English officers came down to the Point for the ostensible purpose of investigating the circumstances attending that fatal affray. They went on board the Spanish ship first, and drank wine with the mate who had been so recently made captain; and I more than half suspected that the new-fledged commander had no disposition to enter any complaint against the man whose sword had given to him his present enviable station. Then the English officers went on board the Portuguese vessel, and drank wine with the surviving duellist; and by the time they were ready to return they had, in all probability, forgotten that any duel had ever been fought.

We had expected that there might be some trouble between the crews of the two vessels; but it seemed that the Portuguese captain was somewhat of a gentleman, after all. On the afternoon of the day of the duel, as we afterwards learned, he went alongside the Spaniard, and informed the officer in command that he would cheerfully move his ship if it was desired; and he would have done so before if he had been asked in a respectful manner; but he did not like to be commanded to do such a thing where the water was free. But the Spaniard said, No. He could unload very well where he was, and should he wish to move, there were plenty of other favorable berths.

So a few pleasant words had thrown oil upon the troubled waters, and all seemed to be satisfied.

It will be understood that when we reached the Hoogly the rainy season was over, and that what is termed the "cold season" had commenced. This cold season commences about the first of November, and lasts through February; but it is not like one of our Yankee winters—not in the least,—the mercury of the thermometer seldom sinking below 60°, and averaging from 70° to 75°, which is really warmer than our early autumnal or spring temperature. But it seems colder there than it does in New England with the thermometer at the same point. The nature of the country—so much of it low and moist, in the neighborhood of the vast jungles—produces an atmosphere that absorbs electricity from the body, so that there is none of that *vim* in the circulation which, in the northern portion of the United States, makes us feel comfortable with the mercury at 65°, while at 75° the women carry their fans.

As might be supposed, one of my chief desires was to see the famous "*Black Hole of Calcutta.*" My readers have probably all heard of it, and many of them may be as well acquainted with the story as I am. Still, as some may not know the circumstances, I will give them as I gathered them from one of the officers who accompanied us upon our visit.

In 1690 the English gained possession of three small villages upon the Hoogly, where they erected trading factories; and eight years later an Indian prince, named Azeen Ooshan, who was friendly to the English, gave them a perpetual lease of these villages, and allowed them to erect fortifications. The first fortification was erected at the village of Calcutta,* and was called Fort William, in compliment to the English king of the time. Under the protection of this fort quite a settlement sprang up here, and the business of the company thrived exceedingly. Towards the middle of the eighteenth century, France and England being at war, trouble sprang up between the French and English in India, which was pushed to the extent of pitched warfare; and it was while the attention of the English commanders was turned towards their Christian enemy that Surajah Dowlah, who had recently become Nabob of Bengal, and who hated the British, gathered together a large army and made an attack upon Calcutta when the English were in no way prepared for proper defence.

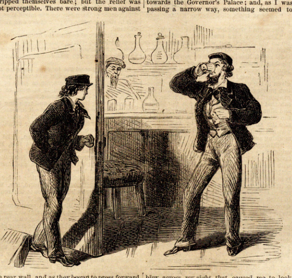
It was in June, 1756, that the Nabob made his attack, with an army of seventy thousand horsemen and four hundred elephants. Calcutta was easily taken, and those who could do so fled to the fort for protection. After plundering the town, and setting it on fire in many places, Surajah Dowlah turned his attention to the fort, which was defended by a mere handful of men with great bravery; but they could not hope to hold out against such odds, and towards evening, on the 20th of June, the garrison surrendered, there being one hundred and forty-six of them left alive.

Down in the basement of the fort was a dungeon, not quite eighteen feet square, constructed for the confinement of refractory soldiers or dangerous prisoners; and never had those in command deemed it safe to keep more than four persons in it at the same time, the ventilation being such that not more than that number could safely be kept there over night. Into this dungeon Surajah Dowlah ordered his prisoners to be put and locked up for the night, and Mr. Holwell, who was of the number, and who chanced to be among the survivors, says that it required the united strength of many men to close the door of the dungeon, so tightly were the prisoners pressed in!

Think of it! Did you ever strain and press to close the lid of your chest when you had packed it so full that the contents refused to be compressed within the required limits? Then think of a dozen stout men setting their shoulders to that iron-barred door, and straining with all their might to shut it against the human mass that over-filled the narrow space! But the door was closed and barred, and the guards were posted upon the outside.

To this dungeon there were two windows, or small barred loop-holes, both upon one side, through which but little air could come at best; but when we remember that the town was on fire in many places, and that the air without was hardly fit to breathe from the dense smoke with which it was loaded, what must have been the air within that dungeon! It was in the hot season, too, when the air would have been sultry and oppressive at best, and when only the most shady and elevated spots could have been anyway comfortable, allowing that no fires had been pouring forth their suffocating clouds of smoke.

The unhappy prisoners had been thus confined but a very few moments when they broke forth into profuse perspiration, and as the system thus began to throw off its water, of course they were seized with fierce thirst. Those near the windows held up their faces to the air, while those who were in the rear strove to press forward. Some one of their number suggested that if they removed their clothing they would have more room to stand in, and most of them stripped themselves bare; but the relief was not perceptible. There were strong men against the rear wall, and as they began to press forward towards the loop-holes, the weaker ones were crushed under foot, many of them being crushed to death, and thus early freed from suffering.



One of the guard, who stood by a window, was offered a thousand rupees if he would have them conveyed to a larger room. He went away, but soon returned, saying that it could not be done. The offer was then doubled; but the man told them that the Nabob was asleep, and that no one dared to awaken him!

As the night advanced the cry for water became general, and at length one of the guard brought some in a pail; but the pail could not be taken through the bars, so those who stood by the windows took it in their hats, and in the rush to secure it, most of it was spilled. No more was brought, and the prisoners now tried to get the guard to end their torture by shooting them. They howled, and hooted, and taunted the sentinels, hoping that they would fire upon them; but, instead of that, the dark-skinned soldiers of the Nabob brought torches, and crowded about the windows to enjoy the horrible spectacle!

As the night crept on, all self-control was lost; many of the unfortunates became delirious; those in the rear pressed madly forward towards the windows; the weak and fainting ones were borne down and trampled under foot, and ever and anon some poor creature in a far corner would sink down and die from asphyxia. After midnight the stench became dreadful, and grew worse and worse every moment. Entirely bereft of sense and reason, the suffering wretches stamped, and howled, and prayed, and cursed, and fought like madmen. To say that it had become a bedlam would convey no idea at all of the horrors of the place. The imagination is powerless to conceive the sufferings of those wretched creatures, or the worse than infernal terrors of the scene. The wildest visionary, drawing a picture of Tartarus, with the snaky-haired Furies brandishing their flaming torches and their coils of hissing serpents, never approached anything like this.

By midnight the victims began to drop off fast, and long before daylight all sentient cries for succor had ceased; for those who survived were either powerless or utterly raving. At six o'clock in the morning the Nabob awoke, and ordered the dungeon to be opened; and of the one hundred and forty-six men who had been there shut up on the evening before, only twenty-three were found alive; and even they were so stupefied as to be utterly powerless; but the fresh air revived them, and in time they recovered their senses and their strength. One hundred and twenty-three had died during the night, having met death in a shape as horrible as that dark thing of terrors could assume!

Mr. Holwell was willing to believe that Surajah Dowlah did not intend to cause any such catastrophe, and that the awful result was due to the malevolence of a few inferior officers; but the majority of those who were cognizant of the facts were unwilling thus to excuse the Nabob.

Lord Clive, who was at that time at Madras, heard of the fall of Calcutta, and at once raised a strong force of English and Sepoys and marched to the relief of the captured factories. Calcutta was retaken, and, in just one year from the catastrophe of the Black Hole, he met Surajah Dowlah at Plassey, where he overcame and entirely crushed him; and, ere long afterwards, the sanguinary Nabob was dethroned and put to death.

I found the Black Hole used as a warehouse; but an obelisk, fifty feet high, had been erected at the gate in memory of the victims who had fallen during that eventful night of June 20, 1756. I went down into the dungeon, where a few chests of opium were stored, and I imagined how one hundred and forty-six stout men could have stood in such a place. I took my pencil and made some figures upon a piece of board; and I found that, upon dividing the superficies of the floor into squares, it would allow a square to each man of about seventeen inches upon a side. Now, an ordinary-sized man measures from forty-eight to fifty inches around the shoulders, and many men measure more than that; but, calling it forty-eight inches, and we find the man requiring a space of at least sixteen inches in diameter in which to stand; so that those poor fellows must have been packed in there in a solid mass. And then I fancied the air all breathed up in a very few minutes, and I thought of the hot, smoke-laden air that came in at those two barred loop-holes, to supply them with the life-sustaining element. I stood there, thus pondering, until my own breath seemed to come and go with difficulty; and then I followed my companions up into the outer world. I had heard often of the BLACK HOLE; and now I had seen it, and had heard its story, and I did not think I should ever forget it.

As we were coming out from the old fortress we were met by two English officers, who recognized Capt. Matthews; and, after chatting with him a few moments, they invited him to repair to a neighboring café with them for a social sit-down. The captain had a mind to go, and he turned and asked me if I would like to accompany him. I knew that he did this out of kindly feelings towards me; but I would not presume upon his kindness, for I also knew that it would be entirely out of character for a youngster like me to be hanging to the skirts of my commander while he was in such company, so I told him that I would remain in that neighborhood while he was gone, and would be sure to be within hailing distance when he came back. I could see by his look that he deeply appreciated my modesty, and I felt a great deal better than I should if I had gone with him.

As soon as the officers had gone, I took a turn towards the Governor's Palace; and, as I was passing a narrow way, something seemed to blur across my sight that caused me to look down the alley. It was curious how this simple thing could have attracted me, for it was no more than the flitting of a shadow, whereas the passing to and fro of many men might not have called from me a look. However, I turned my gaze down this alley, and I saw a man just entering a low house, over the door of which was a swinging sign, upon which was roughly painted a red lion, with a big mug and cross-pipes. Of course, I knew it to be a drinking-house, and it flashed upon me that the man whom I had seen enter was none other than our chief mate. I hesitated but a moment. If Drake had got started upon one of his sprees, perhaps I might stop him; and if I could not stop him, I could leave him. I hurried down, and, as I entered, I saw the man at the bar just raising a glass to his lips. He turned, and our eyes met. It was Mr. Drake; and I saw that as yet he had not drank much. He lowered his glass almost to the bar, then he lifted it again, and drank its contents; and, while he was doing so, I made up my mind that I would meet him as though I deemed nothing was out of the way.

"Well, well," said I, with a smile, as he advanced towards me, "I didn't think of meeting you here, Mr. Drake."

"Where is the captain?" he asked, in an under-tone, and with considerable uneasiness.

I told him how Capt. Matthews had left me, and then he moved with me towards the door; but before we had reached it he stopped and touched me upon the shoulder.

"Beck.," said he, "I am going to drink one more glass, and that shall be the last. Remember, you have my word for it."

He went back to the bar, and called for brandy. He drank it, and paid for it, and then we went out together; and as we stood upon the sidewalk he said to me.

"Beck., I got a chance to come up with the captain of the Portuguese, and I am going right back. I give you my word that I won't drink any more. You won't say anything to Captain Matthew's about this?"

And that was the chief mate of an Indiaman talking to the youngest hand of the ship! I pitied the man, and God knows I felt kindly towards him.

"Mr. Drake," I replied, earnestly, "I will do anything for you that lies in my power. I would advise you, only I am but a boy, while you——"

"Are an accursed fool!" he broke in bitterly. "But," he added, with a brighter look, "it shall all come out right this time. I am glad you saw me. When the Portuguese came aboard to see if any of us wanted to come up with him, I was crazy,—I must have been crazy,—but the sight of you has restored me to my senses. Go, Beck., and keep this to yourself. You sha'n't lose anything by it."

He saw that I hesitated, and then he swore so solemnly that he would go down the river without touching another drop, that I felt I could trust him, and I left him to himself, and went back and stood by the obelisk at the old fort, where I waited for the captain.

"Poor fellow!" I said to myself, as I thought of the mate, and how he had left his post when he ought not to have done it, "there can be no safety for him while this terrible appetite comes to seduce him."

And there arose before me a vision. I saw a dense cloud sweeping away over the river, and in it were the dim outlines of a human form. The vapory mass spread itself out upon the surface of the water, and I saw the human form raise its arms in a frantic, supplicating manner as out from the mist issued a fork of lightning; and the lightning was changed to the semblance of a sword, and it pierced the human form in the bosom. It was Mr. Drake's face I saw in that cloud—his bosom it was that the sword pierced—and I thought he called my name as he sank into the water!

My eyes had not been closed, and yet I had seen it all as plainly as ever I saw anything in a dream. It was a dream, and I can only account for it upon the hypothesis that my thoughts were so entirely absorbed by something that was not present before me, that I did really dream in that waking state. At all events, the circumstance made a deep impression upon me, and from that time I regarded our chief mate as a doomed man.

---

*Calcutta, so called from *Kali Ghatta*, or *Cutta*, the landing-place of *Kali*, the Goddess of Time. There was a rude temple erected to the goddess at this place. The other two villages were Chuttanutty and Gobindpore, both of which are comprised within the present limits of Calcutta, one of them being the locality known as Black Town, upon the North, while the other has given place to a beautiful park on the South, in the midst of which stands the new citadel of Fort William.

—Wisdom prepares for the worst, but folly leaves the worst for that day when it comes.

MY KIND OF SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

With submission to the authorities, it seems to me that the Sunday-schools of to-day are somewhat perverted from the original intention of their founders. As I understand it, their object was to collect the children of poor, ignorant parents for Biblical instruction. I look out of my window, every Sunday morning, upon the spectacle of gaily attired little ladies and gentlemen, leaving the brown-stone fronts of handsome dwellings, and tripping lightly in dainty boots to the vestries of well-to-do churches. As I watch them, I wonder why their parents, educated, intelligent people, or at least with plenty of leisure, should shift upon the shoulders of Sunday-school teachers so responsible a duty? I say "duty," and it is a cold, hard word to use, in connection with a dear little child whose early lessons on religious subjects should be so carefully and cautiously and judiciously unfolded. I cannot understand, and I say this without meaning any disrespect to the great army of well-meaning, good-hearted Sunday-school teachers all over the land, how these parents can reserve to themselves on Sunday morning *only* the dear pleasure of decking their little *persons* in gay Sunday attire, and never ask—never inquire—never think—what may be the answer given by a Sunday-school teacher, to the far-reaching childish question, which may involve a life-time of bewilderment, perplexity, and spiritual unrest, to the little creature, each shining fold of whose garment has been smoothed and patted into place by these "doting" parents; it may be treasonable to say so, but it seems to me an unnatural proceeding. Then again I think these children should *not* occupy the time and attention of teachers, while the poor, who are always with us, are totally uninstructed, far beyond all the humane attempts that have been made, and are daily making, to accomplish this purpose. Surely no teacher whose heart is in his or her work, would let the want of fine clothes stand in the way of such effort. Now when I see the children in a locality like the Five Points, or in the various mission schools established for the benefit of children, I say—Now *that* is "a Sunday-school" after the plan of the founders. These children, who have nothing inviting at their miserable homes on Sunday; whose weary parents have no heart or strength or knowledge for these things; gathered in here by kind men and women; dirty—ragged—and untutored; to whom this weekly re-union is perhaps the only bright spot in their whole little horizon; who sing their little songs with *real* heart and feeling; who believe in their teachers, because they know they have come down to inodorous, disagreeable localities, and love them *because* their lives are not cast in pleasant places; these teachers who, if the children have had no dinner or breakfast, *give* them dinner or breakfast—why—that I call a practical Sunday-school! It is a holy and a blessed thing; and no one can listen to the hearty singing of these little uncared-for waifs of the street, without a choking feeling in the throat, that, if voiced, would be, God bless these teachers! If they were taught nothing but those simple little songs, it were worth all the time, and money, and self-sacrifice involved in the teaching.

Those words ring in their ears during the week. They sing them on the door-steps of the miserable dwellings they call home; there is a "heaven" somewhere, they feel, where misery, and dirt, and degradation are unknown. The passer-by listens—some discouraged man, perhaps, whom the world has roughly used—some wretched woman who weeps, as she listens; and this little bit of Gospel, so unobtrusive, so accidental, so sweetly voiced, is like the seed the wind wafts to some far-off rock—when you look again, there is the full-blown flower; no one knew how it took root or whence it came, but, thank God, winds and storms have no power to dislodge it. My heart warms to *such* Sunday-schools; and, without any wish to disparage others, I cannot but think that, if the parents who are in condition to instruct their own children, would not delegate this duty, the hundreds of teachers by this means freed, might gather in the stray lambs, whose souls and bodies no man cares for.

FANNY FERN.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

JARNIGAN, (Quebec).—Your aspirations to become a "fellow-citizen with the editor of and writers for the New York *Ledger*" are not "treasonable to the British Crown;" nor need you have any fears that the "British Crown" would molest you for entertaining such aspirations, in case the fact should become known thereto. "The Atlantic Provinces of British North-America proposed to be confederated," to adopt the phraseology of the confederators, are Upper and Lower Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland. The total area of these provinces is a little less than 420,000 square miles, and their estimated population at the present time is four millions. Should these provinces be annexed to the United States, it would be a fine thing both for them and for us. It would round out and complete our territorial boundaries in the north-east, simplify the enforcement of our marine revenue laws, and put an end, as between Great Britain and the United States, to all questions of jurisdiction out of which ill-feelings and wars are so apt to arise; and would, at the same time, open up free markets for Canadian lumber and farm products, largely increase the value of Canadian real estate, and infuse new vitality into the entire region now under the jurisdiction of the provinces named. We therefore hope that you will yet become our "fellow-citizen" by "annexation."

WIDOW.—It would be a most absurd thing for you to attempt to interest the "crowned heads of Europe" in your case. It would be more discreet for you to stay at home and apply the money you would expend in travelling over Europe, to the relief of what you call your "necessities." A person who has money to spend in such wanderings must be far removed from a really necessitous condition. In the first place, you could not get a hearing from any "crowned head," and in the next place if you *should* get a hearing and state your "pitiful case," the "*crowned* head" would consider yours a *cracked* one, and probably have you sent to a lunatic asylum. The fact that a woman has lost her husband, and has three great idle sons, whose support and education she wishes to saddle upon strangers, would not be regarded by crowned heads, any more than by uncrowned ones, as a sufficient reason why they should minister to her vanity, weakness and selfishness.

A "BENEDICT."—Perhaps if you would turn to Shakespeare and read up on the action of the character whose name you have adopted in your signature, you might "find something to your advantage." When a man's wife shows traits of character that are diametrically opposed to his own, he should not take it for granted that *hers* are *faults* and that *his* are excellences; nor should he attempt to *crush* hers into conformity with his own, lest he drive her to the desperate mood in which your wife was when she declared that she "would leave you in a minute, if she could get another husband." By a wise forbearance towards your wife, and a faithful expurgation of yourself, you may yet be able to secure at least peace, if not happiness, in your domestic relations; whereas a continuance in your past course will be certain to end in misery, and perhaps in disgrace.

YOUNG MOTHER.—Your two children, one of whom is five and the other three and a half years old, are not too young to be taught to read, *at home*. *You*, in your fond, loving way, can teach them to read without injury to their minds or bodies; but it might be very disastrous to send them to school.

REFORMED.—Your chief lack seems to be *pluck*, both of the moral and physical kind.

"Fallen cherub, to be *weak is miserable*,
Doing or suffering;"

but to be *brave* is *joy*. Rouse yourself to resolute action, and you will triumph.

PHOTOGRAPH.—The young man who refuses to give up your photograph, which he purloined from the parlor table in your father's house, should be handed over to the tender mercies of a magistrate. Stationery should not be wasted upon him.

SUFFERER.—In the case of this correspondent we find a state of things which could only exist in a metropolitan city. She is a widow, with three children, the eldest a girl of nine; the next, a boy of six; and the youngest, a boy three years and a half old. Her husband has been dead over two years. She had quite a little fortune when he died; but being led into an oil speculation by a cousin of her dead husband, she lost every cent she had in the world and got in debt besides, she having given notes, besides putting her money into the speculation. She is now living in a tenement house, and doing such work as she can get to do to support her children, while some of her near relatives are living in opulence in another part of the city, and expend more in a month on extravagant indulgences than it would require to support her and her children in comfort for a year. "Not knowing to whom to turn for advice," she says, "I appeal to the *Ledger*. What would you advise me to do?" You should go to the clergyman of whose church you say you are a member, which you used to attend in your palmy days, and state your case fully to him. He could, and doubtless would, see that your rich relatives did their duty by you under the circumstances.

J. H. K. says: "My attention was arrested by a few remarks in the *Ledger* to 'Critic,' some time back, with regard to 'navigating the air.' You say truly, 'none has ever yet got upon the right track.' Neither will they, so long as they study, and try to model after 'the fowl of the air.' Man was not created with nerves of motion like birds. And this difference exists also in the feathered tribe. For instance: the domestic fowl cannot gather itself up and scud the air like a prairie chicken, wild goose or carrier pigeon. Had man, in proportion to bulk, nerves of motion even equal to those of the horse, he would no doubt go through the air with foot and arm appendages of his own construction. But such is not the case. He has, however, superior observing faculties, with those of construction, and what he lacks in nerves of motion, he must supply in some other way. Incredulity may laugh at the idea as chimerical. Very well; some other ideas in embryo have been laughed at. Laughing and doing heretofore have been quite different things; as any man with half an eye may look back and see. I believe the time will yet come when man will fly through the air."

BERTRAND.—It is as difficult to get at the exact truth as to the compass of voice possessed by a noted vocalist, as it is to get at the exact speed of a "promising young horse" that is up for sale. The only way to get at the latter is to hold one's watch on the horse, as he goes round the track; and an analogous course should be taken in order to find out the compass of "singing" voice possessed by a vocalist. Take him to a piano or organ, and by its relentless test trot him up and down the scale; in that way you can get at something exact and trustworthy. It is reported that Lablache, and also the *basso profundo* of the Rainer troupe of singers that travelled through this country about a quarter of a century ago, could *sing* as low as double G, that is, G on the fourth space below the bottom line of the bass staff; but such reports are to be classed with those concerning the fabulous speed of Flying Childers and old Eclipse. If you can sing smoothly and roundly as low as double B flat, (that is, B flat on the third space below the bass staff,) and have fair execution and a musical voice, you may consider your fortune about as good as made.

HUDSON'S BAY.—Your notion that, in dealing with Indians, trappers, and other "sons of the forest," it is not necessary for a man to act up to as high principles of morality as he observes when carrying on business in an enlightened, Christian community, is an atrocious one. It may not be necessary for a man so situated to conciliate public opinion by a show of rectitude, because he can generally have every thing his own way, so far as mere business matters are concerned, and there is no "social standing" for him to hedge round with the "respectabilities" of conventional life; but the everlasting principles of truth and justice reign in the forest and the region of furs as well as elsewhere, and he who violates them cannot escape coming to grief. The retribution may be delayed, but, like a disease hidden in the system, it is sure at some time or other to make its sting felt.

CAST OFF.—It was undoubtedly cruel in your parents to cast you two foolish young people entirely off because you married clandestinely; but your offence was great, and requires expiation of some kind. Your lamentations over "the fine gr[illegible]s and beautiful walks" of your respective fathers, "which joined each other and blended into one grand estate," seem to indicate that your sufferings flow more from your unmitigated selfishness than from any sense of sorrow or repentance for your own misdoings. You should try to imitate the resignation and fortitude of our First Parents, when they were expelled from their favorite habitation.

"Some natural tears they dropt, *but wiped them soon.*
The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide."

J. W. S. says: "Quite a controversy was raised in our town yesterday by the advertisement which I have copied, thus: 'The Entertainment Repeated.—The Young Ladies and Gentlemen of ——, with Mrs. ——, return to the Citizens their sincere thanks for their liberal Patronage. And by their request, they repeat the Entertainment on Saturday next.' Now, one party in our town contend that the advertisement is correct in every particular, and another party insist that it is faulty and bungling, and bad in style and everything else. The dispute runs high, and we want the *Ledger* to settle it." We think that the members of the anti-advertisement party have the vantage ground in the controversy. The advertisement is certainly a bungling affair.

ARREST.—You should state your case to some Cincinnati lawyer, who is familiar with the municipal laws and regulations of that city and also with the laws of Ohio, and could therefore say whether you were illegally arrested or not. If you mis-stated your pecuniary condition to the party of whom you obtained credit, representing yourself to be worth more than you are, there is doubtless some law in Ohio under which you could be arrested. Your account of the matter bears a suspicious look; it is not the out-and-out, frank, straight-forward statement of a man who is omnipotent in his sense of perfect freedom from all intention to do wrong.

MECHANIC, (St. Louis.)—Your notion of giving up your trade (which you say you are a master of,) so as to get opportunities to study and gratify your hunger for knowledge, is a very pernicious one. You should stick to your trade faithfully, and also assiduously cultivate your mind. Four hours of study every day and eight hours' work, or two hours of study and ten of work, would be better than to give up your trade and be dependent on credit for means to educate yourself. Read President Hill's article "On the Study of the Mathematics," in the *Ledger* of May 18th, and learn how a young mechanic there spoken of worked his way to a responsible and lucrative position.

BRITISHER.—Queen Victoria was born on the 24th day of May, 1819, and has consequently now just entered her forty-ninth year. She has nine children, (five sons and four daughters,) the eldest of whom, the Princess Royal, is in her twenty-seventh year; and the youngest, who is also a daughter, being ten years old. The Prince of Wales was born November 9, 1841, and is therefore in his twenty-sixth year. Queen Victoria succeeded to the British throne June 20, 1837; was crowned June 28, 1838; and was married February 10, 1840.

WISCASSET wants to know, "If, when a man has invited a lady, with whom he is walking in the evening, to take his arm, and she has done so, and then they get separated in a crowd, if it is necessary for the man again to ask her to take his arm, or if she ought not to retake it without his asking her to do so." Either way would be "proper"; but, on the whole, the gentleman should at least extend his arm in such a manner as to make it easy for his companion to resume the grasp of it.

E. S.—Although your friend invited you to call and see his wife, with whom you are unacquainted, it is not likely he meant that you should call formally on her. You should call to see *him*, and then he could introduce you to his wife, and make things pass off without embarrassment to such a timid novice in such matters as you confess yourself to be.

D. P.—The young lady to whom you offered your seat in the car of course had a right to decline it, and there was no reason outside of your own vanity and unsophisticatedness why you should have "felt covered with mortification" at her declination.

E. A. F.—When you and your friends come to New York, you can ascertain what shows and exhibitions are open to the public, by consulting the daily papers; and in the same way you can find some private boarding-house.

HIGH HILL TEXIAN.—If you can't marry in less than three years, you should not seek to bind the young lady to you in a marriage engagement *now*. Wait at least till within a year of the time when you could fulfil such an engagement.

⁂Several letters stand over to be answered in our ne